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## **Lewisburg, Tennessee Community Assessment**

## **Resource Team Community Assessment Report**

**April 9-12, 2012**

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## **Process for the Development of this Report**

The Wyoming Rural Development Council (WRDC) was invited to the City of Lewisburg, Tennessee through the City of Lewisburg Economic Development Board and Director Greg Lowe. Mr. Lowe had participated in a training session the prior year on this Community Assessment process and with the blessing of City leadership invited a team from Wyoming to facilitate a Community Assessment for the City of Lewisburg. Through several conversations, it was decided that a team from Wyoming would conduct the assessment with assistance from the City Economic Development Board. Team members were selected on their knowledge and expertise to best address the issues in Lewisburg. The team was invited to evaluate the community of Lewisburg's assets and liabilities and to develop suggestions for improving the environment, social and economic future of Lewisburg..

The Resource Team visited Lewisburg over a four day period on April 9-12, 2012. Our visit began with lunch with the City's Community Resource Team Planners and then a 2 hour tour of the community including a good overview of the City including recreation and health sites; industrial parks, educational facilities, and historical sites. During the tour the team was given an excellent overview of the community and updated on new projects and issues facing the community. That afternoon we began a series of listening sessions. During the 4 day period we listened to over 155 people in 13 listening sessions and received over 75 written comments. Each person was asked to respond to 3 questions:

- What do you think are the major problems and challenges in the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County?
- What do you think are the major strengths and assets in the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County?
- What projects would you like to see completed in two, five, ten, and twenty years in the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County?

Upon completion of the interviews, the team met to compare notes and share comments following the four days of study and interviews. The team made a preliminary determination of the major themes. The team then agreed that each team member would carefully analyze what was said, synthesize what they heard with their knowledge of programs and resources, prepare their notes and suggestions, and forward these items to be combined into WRDC's final report to the City of Lewisburg.

The preliminary findings were presented to the community of Lewisburg on April 12th at the Lewisburg Recreation Center, which served as the location for the majority of the listening sessions. A preliminary report was presented to the City of Lewisburg in August 2012. We are currently waiting for 1 team member report to finalize the report to the community.

## **Executive Review**

This was a very interesting and exciting process for the Wyoming Rural Development Council. We have been facilitating assessments in Wyoming for 12 years and we were very excited to share our process with another state. It was also interesting for us to see that the issues you are facing are many of the same we face in our rural state. We were happy that we could bring our knowledge, thought and ideas to help Lewisburg, Tennessee.

The reports presented by the team members include a number of short-term, attainable recommendations as well as long term suggestions, ideas and projects. As we took the tour of the community, most of us started scratching our heads wondering if there were any new ideas we could bring to your community! You have so many assets and taken advantage of many opportunities, we were unsure of what we could bring to you. However, I believe you will find that the team has made some good recommendation for some short-term projects, long term projects and ideas to enhance existing projects. Lewisburg has so many assets and so many opportunities it is time to capture those ideas and move forward! We suggest you look through the report carefully, find those ideas that work for you and get started.

Every organization and citizen must decide what is important to Lewisburg to make it a wonderful place to live, work and play and then get involved – be a part of making those positive changes.

On behalf of the Lewisburg Resource Team, I want to thank the people and businesses of the community, and our sponsors –the City of Lewisburg, the Board and Director of the Economic Development organization, Celebration Inn for housing us and feeding us, the many session sponsors and the meal sponsors. There were so many people who showed us hospitality that I can't name them all. I always say that the success of a Community Assessment relies on the planning and coordination by the community and Lewisburg did an outstanding job! We learned a lot about Tennessee and for many team members it was our first time in your great state and we all came home a few pounds heavier!

We hope you will find great value in this report and remember any team member is available for you to call to clarify information or provide more information and assistance.

The Wyoming Rural Development Council is a new resource for you and I hope that we will continue our new friendship and partnership in the future.

Sincerely,

**Mary Randolph**  
**Team Leader**

## **Resource Team Members**

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## **RESOURCE TEAM AGENDA**

### **LEWISBURG TENNESSEE**

<b>Tuesday, April 10</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
10:00 am to 11:30am	Orientation & Organization	Recreation Center
11:30 am to 1:30 pm	Lunch with Community Resource Team Planners	Recreation Center
1:30 pm	Area tour	
3:00 pm to 3:30 pm	Break	
3:45 pm to 4:50 pm	Listening Session with JECDB/Chamber/LDA	Recreation Center
6:00 pm	Dinner	
<b>Wednesday, April 11</b>	<b>Listening Sessions</b>	<b>Location</b>
6:30 am to 7:30 am	Breakfast	Celebration Inn
8:00 am to 9:05 am	Listening Session-City/County	Recreation Center
9:10 am to 10:15 am	Industry/IDB	Recreation Center
10:20 am to 11:25 am	Health Care	Recreation Center
11:30 am to 12:50 pm	Lunch with Civic Groups	Rotary Clubs
1:00 pm to 2:05 pm	Break	Recreation on Center
2:10 pm to 3:15 pm	Education	Recreation Center
3:20 pm to 4:25 pm	Bank and Financial	Recreation Center
4:30 pm to 4:55 pm	Break	Recreation Center
5:00 pm to 6:05 pm	Realtors	Recreation Center
6:10 pm to 7:15 pm	Retail, Business	Recreation Center
7:20 pm	Dinner	Donna Robert's home

<b>Thursday, April 12</b>	<b>Listening Sessions</b>	<b>Location</b>
6:30 am to 7:30 am	Breakfast	Celebration Inn
8:00 am to 9:05 am	Churches	Recreation Center
9:10 am to 10:15 am	Law Enforcement	Recreation Center
10:20 am to 11:25 am	Utilities	Recreation Center
11:30 am to 1:00 pm	Lunch with Seniors	Senior Center
1:25 pm to 2:30 pm	Youth meeting	College
3:00 pm to 4:30 pm	Break	
5:00 pm to 6:30 pm	Dinner	
7:00 pm to 8:00 pm	Resource Team Town Meeting	Recreation Center

## **MAJOR THEMES**

### **Comprehensive Plan**

- Visioning
- Transportation
- Implementation
- Public process

### **Downtown Square**

- Historic Preservation
- Occupancy
- Public safety
- Retail
- Tourism
- Arts and culture
- Events

### **Social Issues**

- Social services
- Taxing benevolent base
- Chronic poverty, suicide, drug abuse, Nutrition/health & wellness

### **Pedestrian Consideration**

- Sidewalks
- Community connection
- Bike paths

### **Living wage jobs**

- Industrial recruitment
- Higher wage/higher growth
- 
- Higher wage/higher growth
- Jobs & Careers

### **Career/workforce development**

- Technical & career education
- HS training-Tech training-living wage careers

### **Community/government Leadership**

- Apathy, “good ole boy network”
- Lack of communication
- Youth involvement,
- Professional expertise
- Governmental conflict
- Transparency

### **Entrepreneurial Development and support**

- Incubator
- Business friendly

### **Communications**

- Siloed within local government
- Civic group coordination
- Church coordination/partnership
- Citizens not informed
- Broadband

## **RESOURCE TEAM MEMBER REPORTS**

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**Introduction:** Our time in Lewisburg was sufficient to absorb a brief sampling of what life must be like in the community and in the County. It was enough time to meet some amazing and gracious people, and enough time to convince me I need to get back to the area to spend some time. I look forward to returning at some point in the future to further explore and enjoy what Lewisburg and Marshall County have to offer.

My impression of Lewisburg was pleasant for the most part. It amazes me that a community of this size possesses the amenities that Lewisburg does. Lewisburg definitely does not display a lack of “Quality of Life” infrastructure. There appear to be plenty of options available. Having said that, it is always true that good people will continue to improve, and continue to wish and work to make things better. That is one of the drivers of a vibrant community. To bring these efforts to fruition is not always an easy task and there are always multiple hurdles, some anticipated, and some from the unknown. Many of these obstacles are actually caused by the good people of the community as they try to do their thing! They are brought about through the establishment of agendas followed by a lack of communication regarding those agendas. It is apparent that Lewisburg is no different than any other progressive community: there are agendas and desires and some appear weakly communicated or coordinated.

**Communication** is a vital ingredient of Community Development. Diverse interest groups that are aware of, and understand each others’ projects, have a much better chance of seeing their projects fulfilled and their community benefit realized, than those who are unknown or unrevealed. Coordination and communication are essential particularly to community projects where public “buy-in” and acceptance are required and/or where public investment is a need. Every effort should be made to vet your projects thoroughly, coordinate with other groups for maximum impact, and keep each other advised as to what the vision is. Discussion, and to some extent even disagreement, make projects stronger or make them go away. Everyone is not interested in everything, but if they are surprised by something or feel they were “left out” of something or it was hidden from them, they soon develop an interest and it isn’t usually a beneficial or agreeable one.

Communicating to the public is always a challenge. There are always those who should know who don’t for a variety of reasons. Public meetings, newspapers, radio, TV, internet all have pros and cons. We are one interconnected country technologically, but we still fail to connect regularly. In my opinion positive, interpersonal communication is the most effective we have. Most people have a communication sphere they operate in and they all cross-connect. It is also extremely important for Newspaper, radio, etc. to understand a project thoroughly and every effort needs to be put forth to educate them accordingly. If they choose to ignore facets of the



issue, or inject their own opinions into the description, they are violating the public trust and should be confronted. News and opinion are two totally separate divisions of media though the lines continue to get grayer.

Enough on communication – simply be open (you know no issue is without a differing opinion), be honest (you know no issue is perfect), and be positive.

**Entrepreneurial Development and Support.** This topic encompasses a couple of issues we heard often in the discussion. The first one I would like to discuss is commonly referred to as **“leakage”**. Leakage entails the loss of potential business, usually retail and service, to the surrounding areas. There are multiple reasons for leakage, the most common being the lack of the particular good or service in the community. When this is the case, and when it is a good or service that is somewhat popular or necessary, residents will travel to an area where it is available. This type of leakage will always occur to a certain extent, as different goods and services are necessary or desirable to different people. The danger with this type of leakage is the damage that accompanies it. When a person makes that trip to acquire that objective, they sometimes make a “trip” of it, eating, recreating, and acquiring additional goods generally at much greater expense than their initial objective, before returning home.

**An entrepreneur with a good judgment and keen observation will seize this opportunity to respond to those needs and desires locally.** Sometimes this is through expansion of a current business, and sometimes these results in establishing a new business.

*One suggestion that I would make would be for a Development Group or Committee to formulate a small survey or similar tool to the residents of the community pointedly asking them “WHAT” is not available in the community that they find regular use or desire for in their lives and workplaces? As answers accumulate you may have sufficient evidence to warrant an entrepreneur doing further investigation, and perhaps responding to that need or desire. You may also find that things are available in the area, unbeknownst to potential customers. At this point you have an excellent opportunity to support existing businesses by locating them the necessary assistance to better market their wares. **This effort also may present the opportunity to somewhat educate the citizenry to the fact that businesses are driven by economics and economics dictate what it is feasible to carry locally.***

My last thought on leakage is one of my favorites and it is very simple. **The highway runs both ways!** Lewisburg businesses could just as well become destination shops as those in surrounding communities. This may require some wider area marketing, possibly forming a marketing coalition or like group of businesses who want to go after growth and volume.

The next thing I would like to speak to regarding Entrepreneurial Development is **financing**. Start-up monies for ALL types of ventures is very difficult to acquire. There are several different categories of start-ups need funding. I will start with the small retail/personal service type businesses referred to above. These ventures usually require the smaller sums but they are also some of the most difficult to fund. Generally there is limited collateral and the potential returns, though possibly steady, are not really glamorous to the investment community. Some sort of a **Micro-loan program** may be able to encourage and facilitate this development segment.

There are Government programs through SBA, USDA, etc. that may provide possible funds for such a venture. They have done good things for a multitude of small businesses nationwide. However, they bring multiple restrictions and regulation issues with them in most cases and harness the decision-making potential of the local board or loan committee. I would preferably recommend some sort of a private mechanism if resources are available. Perhaps a **small investment or “membership” driven micro-loan program subscribed to by the local business community**. The group can be formed with “0” initial investment but would need a formal commitment of some sort to respond to cash calls (limited during formation, i.e. “up to \$5,000 per member” as an example). Under this scenario, as a request is received and reviewed, if a majority of the members are in agreement, either a loan or an investment commitment can be made. I prefer this scenario as it also enables allegiances to the local business. An individual who has participated with a local entity tends to refer, recommend, and otherwise assist that entity.

There are additional ways to finance local small endeavors including the use of a coalition of local lenders sharing risk or privately assisting a micro-loan fund capitalization; major resident corporations pooling some funds to help improve local living for their employee base, etc. etc. My objective in this segment is to fuel the creative juices locally and to emphasize that these things can be accomplished locally, controlled locally, and accomplished without government programs if that is the desire. There is an old saying that sometimes fits “*if it is to be, it is up to me.*”

**Financing is also a major player in larger project - development, and in industrial recruiting efforts.**

Larger loan funds and capital sources are available through several different Federal agencies, and I am sure there are State and TVA programs additionally. Your local development professionals are well aware of those programs, and know their potential and their faults better than I do at this point, so again, I will explore private possibilities.

First off, we need to understand that most multi-national companies are more comfortable working internally and remaining un beholden to local entities, so here we will be directing discussion at the smaller venues – for sake of argument let’s just say \$3 million or less. In my opinion, \$300K to \$3m businesses are the gold nuggets for economic development efforts. These are ventures with substance, and with growth and employment potential. They obviously cannot survive off of the local market. Regional, national, and international markets support huge growth potential in most cases. ***Incentive for these companies covers a wide range of potential, and in my experience an actual loan is pretty far down the list.*** Most of these firms are operationally financed. They are much more interested in operating costs, tax incentives & abatements, and a multitude of operating cost reducers. However, build-ready land opportunities, developed infrastructure, even spec buildings, etc. become the dealmakers. For this reason I believe fund availability, similar to the smaller ones above but more finitely investment oriented, can play an important role even though this type of product is generally government funded, and even owned. Private partnerships, and/or public/private real estate ventures are proving valuable in these instances. Creativity is a key. In Casper, Wyoming where I most recently was engaged in Economic Development, most of the recent ED deals were structured similarly, and a larger one is currently being structured. A huge player in this process

is simply “investor education” – emphasizing with the investors the different ways their reward will be measured and realized.

Another very interesting method of recruitment that appears to be more and more lucrative is **the outright purchase and relocation of small industries**. With baby boomer ownership at or near the retirement age there are a slew of businesses out there that would be willingly sold. The challenge to this method is evaluation. Several stars have to align themselves: *Where is the market and can it be serviced from another location; how much of the existing customer base is loyal to the company/product and how much of the loyalty and volume hinges upon the current owner; even if the present market can be serviced from your new location – are there other potential suppliers closer to that market; and will your raw materials & parts be acquirable at prices and lead times that keep you competitive?* While some of these questions seem of little importance they are important to prudent buyers/investors. At any rate, there seems to be much potential in “buying privately” and using existing area programs to relocate. An added benefit to this method is the ability to hire and relocate key personnel but establish local ownership.

**Town Square Development** will be addressed by a few of the team members. However, as plans are considered for that development please keep in mind that much of the subject matter herein, particularly the suggested survey of residents and the micro loan program, can be integral tools in making that redevelopment happen.

**Living wage jobs** are the ultimate result of most of the Entrepreneurial Support section above. Granted the smaller businesses, retail and personal services, are generally not the big wage payers. That is the nature of the economics of those types of businesses. The higher wage opportunities generally develop in those ventures that cater to large and growing markets regionally, nationally, or internationally. The thing that is so hard to keep in mind in our hard charging society is that all of those companies were, at some point in time, the little guys. The major oil companies drilled their first well at some point; major manufacturers created their first widget at some point; everything is born at some point. Apples, Microsoft, IBM, McDonalds, Wal-Mart, all started somewhere. As you can see, I am a strong advocate of starting and growing. That means that there will be failures but failures sometimes lead to opportunities. It’s the nature of development.

In the shorter term, emphasis can be placed upon those growing companies nationwide who are in expansion mode and are looking for new facility locations. Competition is stiff for those firms as they are what most areas are focused on. That is why the community needs private buy-in and support. One thing I have not yet mentioned about private efforts is **flexibility**. Lack of “program” guidelines presents the private groups a huge advantage – ***they can evaluate and adapt***. Strong support for the local Development Groups is essential to compete in this arena, and is the most proven track to success. Public patience is often the group’s largest hurdle. There are good people currently in position with the ability and the desire to do good things for Lewisburg. Support them.

**Community Government Leadership:** What I heard indicated that there were some perceived issues in community government that really should not be there, and that there was significant apathy in the community toward addressing those issues and participating in the community’s

future. I called them “perceived issues” because I understand that things are not always as they appear. However, if in fact they are not as they appear there must be some kind of a communication issue that keeps the perception from being righted. Bottom line – if it looks like a back door or secretive deal, and it is not righted through appropriate communication, then it effectively “is” that type of a deal in the eyes of the citizens. Clear and reasonable explanation and interpretation are essential to smooth government – citizen relationship. In the time I spent in Lewisburg this outsider got the impression that that communication gap was relatively wide. I hope that as a new Administrator/Manager is selected that he or she will have the skills necessary to open the channels and educate all sides. A cohesive community spirit is essential to a progressive, developing community.

I would suggest that every effort should be made to include all facets of the citizenry, from the young to the old. I would suggest engaging youth, from the high school level up, in some mentoring opportunities in City government, and a “silver-haired” advisory group is always a possibility to assist in avoiding past pitfalls. My guess is that would not be too hard of a group to recruit. Bottom line – it is all about relationships and transparency.

I heard several comments about the local newspaper being opinionated and somewhat negative. Hopefully clear communication and transparent presentation can guide that opinion in a compatible direction and at the very least, positions will be presented without prejudice and/or negative perception. It’s certainly worth the effort and the citizenry deserve it.

**Summary:** What a great opportunity it was for me to participate in the Lewisburg Assessment. I met some really fine individuals, saw evidence of community pride that may not be visible to the mainstream, and salivated over some of your assets and opportunities. Your Business Parks are an inspiration to a guy from Wyoming; the amenities that you enjoy seem incredible for a community your size; and the people we were exposed to were simply engaged and amazing. I look forward to revisiting Lewisburg and Marshall County and hope to get there in the very near future. Thank you!

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*Please feel free to contact me for clarifications, explanations, suggestions, or general conversation!*

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**Introduction:** I am thankful for the opportunity to have spent a week in Lewisburg as part of the Community Assessment team. The town is set in a beautiful area of Middle Tennessee and the people of the community are very friendly and hospitable.

Many thanks to everyone that helped to make the trip enjoyable and educational. We were treated with excellent hospitality and good food during every moment. The quality of Lewisburg's citizens and the interest that they have in their community were very obvious throughout the community assessment process.

### **Theme: DOWNTOWN SQUARE**

**Challenge:** Preserve the historic fabric and character of the downtown area.

**Solution:** One method of developing and instituting a preservation ethic in a given area is through the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. Qualifying as a CLG requires several components including establishing a local historic district, developing and instituting a historical zoning ordinance with a set of design guidelines, and setting up a historic preservation commission to oversee the enforcement of the guidelines. The preservation guidelines should be written to match the character and needs of the particular district and should address the materials and features that are distinctive of the district. The guidelines should also address potential infill within the district.

In addition to providing a mechanism for regulating the historic preservation of the downtown area, becoming a CLG would make Lewisburg eligible to receive grant money from the Tennessee Historical Commission (SHPO). The SHPO is required to grant a certain percentage of its federal apportionment to CLGs throughout the state, therefore grant requests from CLGs receive priority status. Grants awarded to CLGs have included activities such as training commission members, planning, survey, and bricks and mortar activities. To date there are twenty-four (24) CLGs in Tennessee ranging from large towns such as Memphis and Nashville to small communities such as Sparta and Hohenwald.

**Resources:** The contact for further information on becoming a CLG is:  
Dan Brown, Certified Local Government Coordinator  
Tennessee Historical Commission  
615-532-1550 ext 114  
dan.brown@tn.gov

**Challenge:** Financial incentives for rehabilitating buildings in the downtown area.

**Solution:** One of the most common methods of offsetting the cost of rehabilitating a historic structure is through the use of the Federal Investment Tax Credit program. There are two types of these tax credits available, a 20% and 10% credit. Stated simply 20% (or 10%) of qualified expenses incurred in the rehabilitation of a historic building can be claimed as a credit on the owners income taxes. To qualify for the 20% credit a building must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or a part of a district, and the building must be used for an income-producing purpose including retail, office space, and rental housing. Projects using the 20% credit must follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be approved by the National Park Service. The 10% credit is for buildings constructed before 1936 that are not listed in the National Register or part of a listed district. These projects are not required to follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards and cannot be used for housing.

It would be helpful to do a cultural resource survey of the downtown and other areas in the city of historic interest to determine the National Register eligibility of buildings and districts. Such a survey would help to generate a list of buildings that could potentially be eligible for the tax credit. This would help make property owners aware of the credit and help in the marketing of properties to potential investors.

**Resource:** The primary contact for the Investment Tax Credit program is:  
Louis Jackson, Investment Tax Credit Coordinator  
Tennessee Historical Commission  
615-532-1550 ext 106  
louis.jackson@tn.gov

**Challenge:** Opportunities for tourism and general promotion of the historic qualities of the community.

**Solution:** Heritage tourism and the promotion of an area's history help to draw new visitors. Promoting an area's distinct history gives the area a better sense of cultural identity and can also educate the existing citizens by further educating them on their own community's history. This can be done by developing a brochure on the county's history to be distributed at interstate rest stops and regional; museums, and through the development of small to medium scale exhibits to be displayed in various public buildings in Lewisburg. The Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) has experience in developing these kinds of promotional materials. The center also provides lesson plans and workshops on local history curricula that can be used by schools in grades K-12. The development of promotional materials and exhibits can be tied to this curricula to engage school children to not only learn more about their local history, but also to actively participate in preparing exhibits that can be displayed in public areas in town. This will help to promote the history of Lewisburg and help the children involved to feel more invested in their town by having a key role in a project that would be visible throughout the town.

**Resource:** The primary contact for the Center for Historic Preservation is:

Carroll Van West, Director  
Center for Historic Preservation, MTSU  
615-898-2947  
[www.mtsuhistpres.org](http://www.mtsuhistpres.org)

**Challenge:** Safety and accessibility for pedestrians in downtown. Increase pedestrian connectivity between downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

**Solution:** Lewisburg already has an existing greenway system that has the potential to grow and serve as a pedestrian and bike friendly way of connecting people to downtown and diverse neighborhoods. An important priority in the growth of the greenway is to connect it to the downtown square to provide a destination for users of the path. An integral part of this project should include improving pedestrian safety and making the existing sidewalks in downtown more attractive to enhance the pedestrian's experience. Additionally improvements could be made to sidewalks connecting nearby residential areas to the downtown. Funding opportunities to implement an expansion of the greenway to downtown and improvement of existing sidewalks are available through the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Local Program Development Office. In particular, TEA-21 grants are a common mechanism for funding greenway and sidewalk improvements.

**Resources:** The primary contact for TEA-21 grants is:  
Neil Hanson, TEA-21 Grant Coordinator  
Tennessee Department of Transportation  
615-741-4850  
[neil.hansen@tn.gov](mailto:neil.hansen@tn.gov)

Tennessee Department of Transportation Local Program Development Office  
615-741-5314

## **Theme: SOCIAL ISSUES**

**Challenge:** Provide social services, especially for the youth in the community.

**Solution:** Having a safe and reliable place for children to go for recreation and life skills programs is a vital way to give children a positive outlook on their futures. The Boys and Girls Club of America has a successful track record of providing positive programming geared toward disadvantaged children. Programs offered by the Boys and Girls Clubs includes character and leadership development, career development, health and life skills, recreation and fitness, arts, and technology. The clubs serve children in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Providing a facility such as a Boys and Girls Club would provide educational opportunities to at risk children and give them additional positive adult role models that they may be lacking elsewhere in the community. It also benefits working parents by providing a safe and supervised place for their children to go after school and during the summer months. Boys and Girls Clubs

have been established in the nearby communities of Columbia and Pulaski, and could serve as models for establishing a Boys and Girls Club in Lewisburg.

**Resources:** The primary contact for starting a Boys and Girls Club is:

Boys & Girls Clubs of America  
Southeast Service Center  
1275 Peachtree St. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30309  
404-892-3317

Existing clubs within the area that could provide advice or a model of operations are:

John Stephens  
Boys and Girls Club of Maury County  
210 West 8th Street  
Columbia, TN 38401  
931-490-9401

Jerry Primus  
Boys and Girls Club of Pulaski  
931-424-5815

**Challenge:** High rate of suicide in the county.

**Solution:** Statistics show that Marshall County has consistently had higher than average rates of suicide over the past decade. Since 2005 the reported suicide rate for the county has ranged from 17.4-26.7 (rate per 100,000 in population). During this same time frame the rate for the state of Tennessee has ranged from 13.7-14.7 and nationally the rate has been between 11 and 12. To combat consistently high suicide rates the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network has established county specific task forces in counties that show sudden spikes or have consistently high suicide rates. The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network generally seeks to work with the county health department, county medical examiner's office, the mayor's office, and mental health professionals to establish a task force. These task forces have been implemented in various counties across the state that have shown high suicide rates including Blount, Giles, Hickman, and Dekalb counties, and have shown measurable amounts of success. Furthermore, the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network offers training opportunities for professionals and interested community members that work with youth through the Tennessee Lives Count program. These trainings can be one or two day workshops geared to suicide prevention. Additionally postvention training and support is available in the unfortunate case of a suicide death of a student or staff member.

**Resource:**

Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network  
615-297-1077  
[tspn@tspn.org](mailto:tspn@tspn.org)



Karyl Chastain Beal, Regional Chair  
South Central Tennessee Region, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network  
931-388-9289  
karylcb@bellsouth.net

Brandon Cammarata  
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307-638-4303  
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The few days spent in Lewisburg Tennessee were a great opportunity and experience. Your community's assets were evident, as well as many passionate members of your community which are a great foundation. Numerous recreation opportunities, natural amenities and beauty as well as proximity to important infrastructure and economic centers are examples of the assets we saw. I thank the set up team for their detailed preparation and hospitality of the entire community. There was excellent turn out for most of the listening sessions.

### **Theme: PLANNING**

**Challenge:** During our listening sessions the desire for planning was repeated, describing a need for a community vision and policies to be considered as decisions are made over time with the hope of plotting a course to the future and making adjustments as necessary.

**Solution:** Complete a comprehensive plan for Lewisburg. A primary purpose of a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework for future decisions to be made and discussed and future initiatives to be pursued and to hopefully continue and maintain a community wide discourse about the future of the community. Most states have grants available for smaller communities to get started with their planning efforts. In most cases a community will use the grant to hire a consultant to help with the creation of the plan. The consultant provides both expertise and the ability to dedicate their time to the completion of the planning project, much like hiring a contractor to do specific work for the Community. The final product will be a usable document unique to Lewisburg which will evolve over time as goals are accomplished and changes occur in your community.

The following are components of a plan that I have seen as successful, these are details and approaches that you may want to include in a request for proposal (RFP) if you hire a consultant to help complete the task. I would recommend hiring a consultant team to complete this task both from an expertise and experience point of view and the reality that any existing staff probably does not have the time to complete the project:

- **Public Involvement.** A major part of the comprehensive plan is the public involvement and participation in the creation of the plan. This seems a bit redundant and it is often a difficult frustrating exercise, but ultimately public participation is a critical component of the process.
- **Branding the Plan.** Branding the planning process by name and logo is useful to the process and ongoing success of the document. It helps a wider range of people identify with the plan and the process.

- **Formatting.** This refers to creating a user friendly layout for the document, again increasing the potential that it will be used. A simple way to describe the approach might be magazine style with heavy usage of pictures, diagrams, sidebars and tables as well as clearly written and easily identifiable sections and ideas. This is a lot easier to do today than even 5 years ago with lots of cost effective options. Plans can be used to provide information for investors, developers, grant applications and more. Unbundling topics may be an approach to get the most out of your plan. This means formatting so that particular ideas can be printed off in one or two page segments that could stand alone to communicate an idea.
- **Web Accessibility.** Explore the potential of web based final documents; these sorts of options are becoming easier all the time.
- **Integrated.** The comprehensive plan is an opportunity to look at a wide range of interrelated activities. At a basic level plans usually are looking at where future growth of the community is expected, both for infill or redevelopment as well as new areas. Plans also look at the transportation systems and infrastructure needs. Plans also look at open space goals and expectations of you community. Within each of these there are usually elements of goals or policies to be used or advance.
- **To do List.** Use the plan to establish a to do list. The more detail the better in terms of describing proposed goals. Describing levels of urgency, estimated costs and effort required, and responsible parties or agencies is helpful. Also being able to come back to the list and identify accomplishments is also useful.
- **Land Use Patterns.** This is impacted by the community vision to describe what types of land uses the community desires. Fiscal responsibility will also be part of the discussion in terms of what types of development patterns can the City afford to maintain and provide service to, relative to the tax base the development pattern are providing.

Resources: The production of such a document may cost somewhere between \$40,000 and \$100,000 depending on how much you ask to be done. I would expect somewhere on the lower end of the spectrum is doable for a community of this size. Most states have grant funding for planning in smaller communities. I believe the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development may be a starting point <http://www.state.tn.us/ecd/>. Here is a newspaper article which seems to indicate funding for planning grants may be available <http://www.wate.com/story/15107566/small-towns-can-apply-to-state-for-planning-grants>. Another potential resource for local knowledge is the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association (<http://www.tnapa.org/>), I am not directly familiar with the Chapter, but in general state chapters have a lot of local expertise and knowledge on local tools. [Take a look at comprehensive plans completed by surrounding communities and communities you consider to be comparable and/or your competition.](#)

### **Theme: DOWNTOWN SQUARE REVITALIZATION**

**Challenge:** Improving the downtown square was repeated throughout our visit and was clearly a priority for a lot of folks.

**Solution:** There is not an easy solution and it will not be the same solution as someplace else, but persistence over decades will make it happen and the rewards can be far reaching. There are a lot of stories of how downtowns get revitalized and each is different. In most towns the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods is the one built environment in the community that is unique as opposed to commercial development at edges of a community which are virtually identical to other places. Downtowns are places of civic pride and often help tie a community together and once a downtown has turned the corner back to vitality they become unique economic assets to a community paying for themselves many times over.

- Pedestrians – Downtowns were laid out before cars were invented hence they were laid out to be walk able. As such they function differently than economic centers on the fringe of the community which are designed for cars and trucks. Calming traffic in the downtown is critical to the pedestrian environment. Attention to detail and design of the public realm is important in the downtown. Most communities will have standards for streetscape development in the downtown. This is important so as improvements and opportunities occur over time there is a clear direction you are going.
- Employment and activity. As a seat of government keep your downtown goals in mind when new facilities are considered.
- Residential uses are keys to a successful downtown. Keep this in mind when considering other housing goals such as senior housing which may be a good fit near downtown.
- Planning Approaches. A course needs to be platted. Don't be discouraged; sometimes plans don't take for various reasons, which should not be reason to abandon the downtown.
  - Needs – Identify specific needs. Utilize the empty space on the square, Improvements to sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, etc.
  - Remedies – For each need a specific remedy needs to be identified.
  - Tasks – Specific task need to be identified to achieve the remedy
  - Success Metric – How will success be measured
  - Responsible Parties - Who or what is the logical group(s) to initiate a remedy
  - Time allowance – How long will this take and when should it occur
  - Budget. – What will this cost
- Low tech solutions with high visibility - One of the benefit of a downtown, is most of the major pieces are already in place (the buildings and the infrastructure). Thus there are usually low cost high visibility improvements that can make a difference and keep momentum.
  - Continue to utilize downtown for social events.

- Sidewalk Improvements, including street furniture such as lighting, benches bike racks, and street trees.
- Façade/window improvements
- Traffic circulations. Making pedestrians comfortable in downtown is critical.
- Identify of shared parking opportunities to accommodate event and activity
- Helping businesses in the downtown, in some ways a downtown is like a mall and functions best when folks are on the same page.

## Resources:

**Mainstreet.** This is a great tool and a great start to working on downtown.

<http://www.tennesseemainstreet.org/>

CDBG. Community Development Block grants is sometimes an option in downtown areas.

Case Study. Evanston Wyoming in the southwest corner of Wyoming about 2 hours north of Salt Lake is case study of a successful downtown in a town of around 11,000 and has many lessons learned. <http://www.evanstonwy.org/>

**Streetscape.** In addition to overall standards for your downtown streetscape handbooks are useful tools to communicate ideas. *City of Cheyenne Streetscape / Urban Design Elements*  
<http://www.cheyennecity.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/747>

**Tax tools.** Depending on what you state allows and what you community is willing to invest there are numerous taxing tools to produce a pot of money that can be reinvest back into the downtown for projects and ongoing upkeep of the downtown area. Examples include Tax increment financing through either sales or property tax of both as well is a dedicated property tax mill.

## Theme: PEDESTRIAN CONSIDERATION

**Challenge:** Expand upon the success of the Rock Creek Trail and develop a sustainable pedestrian network throughout the community. Lewisburg has taken steps toward establishing an off-street trail system or greenway with the beautiful Rock Creek path as a connection to downtown. In general basic facilities such as sidewalks and amenities such as the trail are important components to the City's quality of life portfolio when competing for economic development with similarly situated communities.

**Solutions:** Public streets are designed to accommodate vehicles and pedestrians, bicyclists and transit. There are different approaches to all of these accommodations and they vary based on the context. For example the state roads running through the town function and are designed differently downtown, compared to through the surrounding areas and on the highways.

Having a plan of attack will allow a community to sustain an effort and to take advantage of opportunities (funding) the come along. Since the community appears to be looking at both greenway trails and sidewalks it may be effective to look at these together as working toward an overall network that includes both off street trails and sidewalks on the public streets to form a walk able network. A plan is an opportunity to prioritize connections and coordinate

connections together to eventually nit together walk able networks. A plan prepares a community to take advantage of grant opportunities which usually require demonstration of a cohesive effort with public support. The plan also lays the groundwork for policy directions moving forward for how your community will look at pedestrian facilities with new growth and when roads have to be reconstructed.

### **Implementation**

A common approach for communities to address pedestrian and bicycle needs is known as the 5 E's. In many cases grant fund options are looking for communities to have addressed the issue with this multi-faceted approach.

[http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/communities/bfc\\_five-Es.php](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/communities/bfc_five-Es.php)

### **FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES**

**Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds** (section 1007) may be used for wither the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or non-construction projects (such as brochures, public service announcements and d route maps) related to safe bicycle use. Ten percent of STP fund are used to Transportation Enhancements which include provisions of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/local/cities.htm>

**Federal Lands Highway Funds** (section 1032) may be used to construct pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities in conjunction with roads, highways, and parkways at the discretion of the department charged with the administration of such funds

**Scenic Byway Program Funds** (section 1047) may be used to construct facilities along scenic highways for the use of pedestrians and bicyclists <http://www.bywayonline.org/>

**National Recreational Trails Fund** (section 1302) monies may be used for a variety of recreational trails programs to benefit bicyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorized and motorized uses. Project must be consistent a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan required by Land and Water Conservation Act Fund.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Local Community Grants**

<http://www.nps.gov/lwcf/>

**Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)**

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/index.htm>

**Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S)** <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

**Rural Economic Development Grants** <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/Home.html>

**Community Development Block Grants** <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD>

**Resource Conservation and Development Funds.** This program administered by US Natural Recourses and Conservation Service, provides 50% matching funds for

recreation projects including parks and land acquisition. The funding is available to state and local government and nonprofit organizations <http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/>

## STATE RESOURCES

**TDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program** <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/bikeped/>

## LOCAL RESOURCES

**Developer Dedications**, with new developments getting trail corridors and public open spaces.

**Local Mill Levy Dedicated to recreation or trails**

**Bond Issues**

**Local Sales Tax**, Depending on what your state allows, special project taxes, specific fund taxes or recreation taxes are often used

**Foundations**

**Corporate Sponsors**

**Direct appropriation**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Bikes Belong Coalition** is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry and accepts request for funding of up to \$10,000 for facility, capacity and education project.

<http://www.bikesbelong.org/>

**Complete Street** is an excellent resource for the concept of properly designed and multi-use street. <http://www.completestreets.org/>

**The League of American Bicyclist** <http://www.completestreets.org/> promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation.

The **Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professional** <http://www.apbp.org/>

The **Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center** offers training courses, research and tool, sample plans and maps <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/> or

<http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/>

**National Association of Transportation Officials (NACTO)**, state of the art resources being implemented across the country <http://nacto.org/>

**Rails to Trails Conservancy** <http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html>

The **Kodak American Greenway Award**

[http://www.conservationfund.org/kodak\\_awards](http://www.conservationfund.org/kodak_awards) planning and technical assistance

**Walk Score** <http://www.walkscore.com/>

*Special Thanks to Jeff Wiggins, AICP. City of Cheyenne Greenway Coordinator for identifying these resources.*

**Shauna Gibbs, Rural Housing Programs Specialist**  
**USDA/Rural Development**  
**100 East B Street**  
**P.O. Box 11005**  
**Casper, WY 82602-5006**  
**Phone: (307) 233-6722**  
[shauna.gibbs@wy.usda.gov](mailto:shauna.gibbs@wy.usda.gov)

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Lewisburg, Tennessee is a great community! We were welcomed with open arms, friendly faces, and eagerness by the citizenry to learn how the community could improve. I now know what “Southern Hospitality” really means! The friendly, welcoming, and generous spirit was demonstrated by everyone we met. We heard story after story of how members of the community had stepped up to help people in need and tackle important projects.

Lewisburg has a long tradition of family, faith, and community support, which will serve you well as you seek ways to improve your downtown square, create sustainable employment, plan for your future, deal with social issues, improve communication and enhance your vibrant community.

## **THEME: SOCIAL ISSUES**

**Challenge:** Lewisburg is not unlike other rural communities who struggle with issues of chronic poverty, suicide, drug abuse, and the general health and wellness of its citizens. With federal, state, and county budget cuts, agencies are working harder but with fewer financial and human resources. Churches and volunteers are picking up the slack, but it is becoming increasingly more difficult to cover all the needs.

**Solution:** Tennessee is known as the Volunteer State and Lewisburg certainly exemplifies the tradition! Volunteerism was named as a strength in all of the focus groups. You have a strong faith-based community, but there are duplications in services. Build on what you already have in place and consider pooling your resources.

Churches, mental health care providers, medical professionals, poverty agencies, food banks, etc. can all work together to form a one-stop shop for individuals and families in need. Consider forming a non-profit 501(c) (3) charitable organization such as Interfaith of Natrona County (Casper, Wyoming). It is an example of a successful collaboration of secular and non-secular organizations to provide coordinated emergency services for shelter, clothing, food, transportation, etc.

Interfaith of Natrona County maintains a central intake and referral center for religious and private sectors of the community. It provides responsible dispensing of funds and record keeping. Each recipient of services must complete a general information data sheet that includes income, current housing status, and services they are currently receiving.



Interfaith is staffed by both paid professionals and volunteers and is located in an easily accessible area of the city. Among many other things, the organization maintains a comprehensive list of referral services. The list is categorized by type of service and includes the name of the entity, address, phone number, and a brief description of the service offered. The staff of this organization is willing to share their information, experience, and forms!

### **Interfaith of Natrona County**

Marilyn Duymond Wagner, Executive Director

300 North Center Street

Casper, WY 82601

Phone: (307) 235-8043; FAX: (307) 235-8711

Email: [interfaithnc@yahoo.com](mailto:interfaithnc@yahoo.com)

<http://www.interfaithnc.org>

<http://www.501c3.org>

**Challenge:** Persistent or generational poverty as opposed to situational poverty. Marshall County ranks in the lower third of the Tennessee counties with overall poverty rate of 16.4% (American Fact Finder 2).

**Solution:** This issue needs a comprehensive approach and can be aided by a non-profit organization similar to the one described above or like the Open Table approach used in California, Arizona, Texas, Iowa, and Florida. The Open Table is also a 501 (c) (3). “Tables serve the great diversity of impoverished families — homeless, working poor, refugees, single men, single parents, intact families, elderly, young adults aging out of foster care, prisoner re-entry, mentally disabled, recovered drug addicts, non-violent felony backgrounds — who are ready to live in to their full human potential.

<http://theopentable.org/>

**Challenge:** We repeatedly heard that drugs (alcohol, prescription drugs, cocaine, and methamphetamines) are a problem. Because of the close proximity to Interstate highways, there were concerns expressed about increased drug trafficking. Suicide was also listed as a growing issue.

**Solution:** The consensus appears to be that Lewisburg does not have a greater problem than most communities its size. Keep in mind that behavioral and mental health are key components in the general health and wellness issues of communities and their importance should not be overlooked. Prevention and treatment are critical in dealing with both drug and suicide issues. The following reference for the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is an excellent resource for information on prevention, public awareness, and grants. The site also shows data collected as part of the Drug Awareness Warning Network (DAWN).

<http://www.samhsa.gov/prevention/>

### **THEME: COMMUNICATION**

**Challenge:** “Expand broadband services” was consistently noted throughout the listening sessions. It is especially needed in the more rural areas of the county.

**Solution:** USDA/Rural Development has an excellent Broadband Loan Program administered through the Rural Utilities Service. The loans provide funding for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of all facilities required in order to provide broadband service. Applicants can be non-profit or for profit organizations. The service area must be completely contained within rural areas that have a population less than 20,000. The eligibility criteria are extensive, but certainly worth exploring! For more information, contact your RUS General Field Representative.

USDA/Rural Development

Terry L. Kokinda, General Field Representative

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[http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp\\_farmbill.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/utp_farmbill.html)

[http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/supportdocuments/BBLoanProgramBrochure\\_8-11.pdf](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/supportdocuments/BBLoanProgramBrochure_8-11.pdf)

**Challenge:** There is a general lack of information sharing among the departments within the city government. Civic organizations, churches, and businesses don't coordinate their efforts. There is no common place to seek information about what is happening in the community.

**Solution:** Again, build on what you already have in place. Enhance your existing website to be more of a community based website, one that reflects the culture, the history, and pride in the community. Include links to businesses, churches, social services, community calendar, service organizations, tourist attractions, recreation, progress on City Square development, updates on construction, etc.

Don't rule out professionals, but also tap into the technology talent of the community. Consider partnering with the local high school and college to combine classroom instruction and real world application of skills. Bring out Lewisburg's inner Geeks by sponsoring a contest (with prizes) for the best web design. Think about starting an internship program to provide the labor necessary to update and maintain an always current and relevant website. It's a good way to encourage community involvement and engage your youth, as well as your other talented citizens.

We are an internet society. We want the information delivered to our mobile devices, and we want it instantly! People traveling through Tennessee are going to want to know where they can fix a flat tire, where they can eat, what the community has to offer. For millions of people, the internet is going to be their first stop and it is very important to make a great first impression! Some of the following are award winning sites you may want to explore.

<http://www.downtownathensga.com/index.php>

<http://talgov.com/>

<http://www.parkeronline.org/>

<http://www.haysusa.com/>

**Solution:** Develop a communication plan. Learn from what others have done. For example, medical communities have often been successful in awareness campaigns. Under Tools and Resources at the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website, there is some good information about communicating your message. The site has social media tool kits, community action guides, and information on how to build understanding on issues.

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/index.htm>

Another good source for communication strategies is “Engaging Citizens to Address Community Concerns”, Kettering foundation Citizens at Work Project December 2012 found on the Southern Growth Policies Board website.

[www.southerngrowth.com/pubs/pubsindex.html](http://www.southerngrowth.com/pubs/pubsindex.html)

**Solution:** While internet communication is very important, not everyone has access to a computer. Don’t neglect traditional methods of disseminating information like newspapers, radio, television, newsletters and even flyers in bank statements or utility bills. An electronic billboard placed along a busy street may also be a good investment.

### **Challenge: ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT**

**Solution:** Entrepreneurship and the downtown often go hand in hand. Struggling downtowns often have low rents and available space. These may be good locations for new locally owned businesses to get started and at the same time contribute to supporting downtown with new rents and activity.

### **Challenge: COMMUNICATIONS**

**Solution:** Leadership and professionalism in local government are required to provide a business friendly environment which is conducive to growth and investment.

- Predictable Development Framework. Clear development standards and processes that are consistently used and applied are an important part of producing a predictable environment for investment to occur which in turn is business friendly. Various processes standards and reviews should be clearly articulated and consistently applied.
- Professional Administration. The City Administrator is a critical piece to the puzzle. A professionally trained and experienced City Administrator will set the tone for how the City is run. A high level of professionalism, expertise, experience and leadership is required for this position.
- Coordination between agencies. Development requires a developer to deal with multiple agencies, departments, and even jurisdictions. Finding ways to coordinate information, standards and processes is helpful to produce a positive environment for investment. Generally this can be a product of leadership and professionalism to find a way to make processes work better.

**Elaina Zempel**  
**Wyoming Business Council**  
**SW Regional Director**  
**1100 Pine Ave, Suite 2-E**  
**Kemmerer, WY 83101**  
**307-877-2203, Cell 307-723-1510 [e.z@wyo.gov](mailto:e.z@wyo.gov)**

Thank you so all who provided so much to us during our time in Lewisburg. You have a wonderful community with strong foundation blocks to develop and build your community. Lewisburg has made significant steps to ensure its economic success and has most of the ingredients for successful ED recruitment of the community:

- 12 hour drive from 36 states
- Developed Business Park
- Spec building – ready for business
- ED Director/organization
- I-65 location
- One hour from Nashville, TN and Huntsville, AL both with International Airports
- 40 minutes from I-40
- Available workforce
- Existing Major Industrial Manufactures
- Designated HUB Zone

Now it takes patience and continued effort in the face of delayed reward. Often the elected leadership “blinks first”. When ED efforts do not yield the defined result in the prescribed timeline, the elected officials are on the front line answering to their constituents about the failed ‘return on investment’. Communication and education of those individuals is imperative to any ED success.

In Stephen Covey’s book, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Habit #2 is to “Begin With the End in Mind”. Lewisburg would benefit from a plan that defines that end with the understanding that such a document is fluid and needs to reflect any paradigm shifts (i.e. recession, boom economy, etc.). Additionally, any ED successes that come at the expense of other projects and/or quality of life tradeoffs that are far more valuable to the community as a whole are a hollow victory.

Lastly, Greg Lowe is a great asset. His enthusiasm and energy level make him very effective at his job. I encourage you to develop a strategy to keep him employed for Lewisburg.

I am addressing three of the major themes we heard at the listening sessions:

- Social Issues:
- Community/Government Leadership:
- Entrepreneurial Development and support:

## **SOCIAL ISSUES:**

I feel pretty inadequate even addressing this issue as an Economic Developer. I did, however, have the privilege of sitting on the board for four years for the Northwest Area Foundation. During my tenure, northern Montana was awarded a grant to help reduce poverty in 11 counties along the former Great Northern Railway.

One of the major themes we heard during our time in your community was a concern for social services currently being offered in your community:

- Church Benevolent delivery system being strained beyond its volunteer base and financial means:
  - Suggestion: Through the Ministerial Association, a coordinator (volunteer but preferably paid), to schedule community based outreach programs including youth activities, meals, etc. This coordination will eliminate some of the duplication of services. Suggest including the State/County's Social Services representatives on some level. These government agencies typically address nutrition/health & wellness, suicide and drug abuse.
- Chronic/Generational Poverty:

Key Points about poverty need to be addressed prior to discussing the ways to work with those affected by it.

1. Poverty is relative. If everyone around you has similar circumstances, the notion of poverty and wealth is vague. Poverty or wealth only exists in relationship to known quantities or expectation.
2. Poverty occurs in all races and in all countries.
3. Economic class is a continuous line, not a clear-cut distinction.
4. Generational poverty and situational poverty are different. Generational poverty is defined as being in poverty for two generations or longer. Situational poverty involves a shorter time and is caused by circumstance, i.e. death, illness, divorce.
5. These points are based on patterns. All patterns have exceptions.
6. An individual brings with him or her, the hidden rules of the class in which he or she was raised. Even though the income of the individual may rise significantly, many of the patterns of thought, social interaction, cognitive strategies, remain with the individual.
7. Schools and businesses operate from middle-class norms and use the hidden rules of the middle class. These norms and hidden rules are never directly taught in schools or in business.
8. For all to be successful, they must understand the hidden rules and understand the rules that will make them successful at school and at work.
9. To move from poverty to middle class or middle class to wealth, an individual must give up relationships for achievement.

*Key Points of Poverty and Suggested Reading from: Understanding and Working with Students and Adults from Poverty by Ruby Payne. aha! Process, Inc.*

## **COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP:**

Apathy, ‘good ole boy network’, lack of communication, governmental conflict and transparency were mentioned at some level in every one of the listening sessions. Nothing I write here is going to remedy the situation until the citizens and the leadership of your community commit to the solution.

I have pasted the 20 Clues below and have highlighted, in red, those that I believe are the areas, that if addressed, Lewisburg could benefit the most from. Some enormous steps in these areas have already been achieved in Lewisburg, such as #11 with Mayor Barbara Woods being elected.

### **20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL**

**1. Evidence of Community Pride:**

Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.

**2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:**

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

**3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:**

In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.

**4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:**

Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.

**5. Cooperative Community Spirit:**

The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.

**6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:**

Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.

**7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:**

Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.

**8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:**

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

**9. Active Economic Development Program:**

There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.

**10. Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:**

People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.

**11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:**

Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.

**12. Strong Belief in and Support for Education:**

Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.

**13. Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care:**

Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.

**14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:**

The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

15. Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life: Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.

16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:

Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.

17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:

Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.

18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:

Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.

19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:

People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.

20. Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:

Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

\*Reprinted from Heartland Center Leadership Development, Spring 2002 Visions Newsletter.

### **How Kentucky Highlands EZ Does It**

Jackson County, part of the Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone, reports its best example of citizen participation is its Vision 2000 Project Group. The group meets monthly, and subgroups often meet three times per month.

The monthly meeting has never had fewer than 30 attendees, and usually attracts 40-45. There are always new faces at every meeting, so they estimate 100 or more individuals representing more than 20 different agencies and organizations are involved altogether. The momentum of this group has not worn off, but seems to get stronger and stronger.

The differences between this group and other EZ groups seem to determine why the Vision 2000 Project Group is so successful:

- From the first planning meeting, every community agency and organization in the county was invited. From the get-go, the group got their input—not after it had already decided what to do.
- They used the storyboarding technique, which allows participants to say anything as long as it's not negative, and it is placed on newsprint. No matter how good or bad the idea is, no one is allowed to make judgments or comments about the newsprint at that meeting. After the



meeting, notes are taken from the storyboard and then the process of elimination begins.

- Meetings are advertised in the paper, but they also send colorful, energized reminders with uplifting or encouraging quotes out to everybody.
- At every meeting, each person is asked to introduce themselves and their organization.
- After introductions, the vision and mission statement is always read to remind participants of why they are there.
- An icebreaker is used at each meeting. It is always the same one. A member of the group volunteers to make five statements to the group about her or himself. Four are true statements and one is false. The group works together to figure out which are truths and which is false. It is an excellent way to learn more about each other, and helps the group to see each other as individuals.
- They always use the same facilitator whenever possible to create continuity; people always know who they are going to "get."
- They serve food. Sometimes it is potluck; sometimes a wonderful cook in the group prepares home-cooked meals, and they collect money to reimburse costs. Sometimes, one of the organizations takes responsibility for the food. Spending half an hour eating and conversing is time well spent, and something to which people look forward.
- Each person realizes their importance to the group. They feel responsible to it. They feel like they are needed—and they are.

#### How Josephine County EC Does It

The Josephine County Enterprise Community in Oregon began publication and free distribution to every family in Census Tract #3601 of a monthly community newsletter, The Big News. This "voice of the community" is read avidly and includes news about community activities including the school, the Community Response Team, the Teen Center, the Oregon Parent Center and other agencies and organizations.

The two volunteer editors who have published this 12 to 16-page newsletter for the past four years retired this fall, passing the baton to a team of volunteers including 5 middle school and high school youth. The newsletter team prides itself for always making sure that the newsletter is in people's homes the first of each month.

Fellow team member Brandon Cammarata is addressing the need for a Comprehensive Plan. I believe a Comprehensive Plan is imperative for Lewisburg to continue to move forward. To be successful, this Plan will need to include a process to insure participation by the Community in the decision making. Public participation is time-consuming (notices, logistical coordination, etc.), frustrating (no one shows up), messy (they do show up!) and VITAL!



Local governments must work to entice citizens to exercise this right. Community decisions that involve citizens are more likely to be acceptable to a broad range of local people, and arguably beneficial to the average citizen. Participation without influence, such as at traditional public hearings on zoning, can cause apathy or anger among citizens.

There are three rationales for citizen participation.

- First, it promotes dignity and self-sufficiency within the individual when the opportunity to participate exists.
- Second, it taps the energies and resources of individual citizens within the community.
- Finally, citizen participation provides a source of special insight, information, knowledge, and experience gained through discussion and representative of citizen consensus, which contributes to the soundness of community solutions. The result is an emphasis on well-supported problem solving to eliminate deficiencies in the community.

Citizen participation can legitimize a program, its plans, actions, and leadership. To legitimize can often mean the difference between success and failure of community efforts. Unsupported leaders often become discouraged and drop activities that are potentially beneficial to community residents. When citizens are involved, they may be more likely to volunteer, reducing the cost of the project. This success may translate into economic benefit or even improved services or better community building in general.

Many think solely of town meetings or hearings when citizen participation is mentioned. Another form of citizen participation is a “charrette,” or a design workshop. It is a collaborative planning process often sponsored by a community or a developer, which, according to the National Charrette Institute, “harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a buildable plan.” It is a process that encourages people to envision the future of a place, and promotes buy-in among community members.

Despite the real and perceived benefits of citizen participation, there are upfront costs involved, including time, money, skills, and even confrontational conflicts between residents. In the end, citizens must make the decision to be involved or not based on the amount of personal impact they are willing to accept.

*Taken from: Tennessee Association of Community Leadership (TACL) is a volunteer association that builds, supports and enhances community leadership program development in each county across the state of Tennessee. [www.leadershiptennessee.com](http://www.leadershiptennessee.com)*

## **ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT:**

Key Elements in forming a successful business incubator program/facility:

Ask yourself these questions before involving your organization or community in building an incubator. “An old building does not an incubator make.”

1. What kind of clients will the incubator serve?
2. What kind of Entrepreneurial Support will the incubator offer?
  - a. Business education

- b. Leadership Training
  - c. Mentoring
3. What Shared resources are needed?
  - a. Office equipment
  - b. Kitchen equipment
  - c. Receptionist
4. Is there a stream of enough potential entrepreneurs to keep the incubator viable? Theoretically, those entrepreneurs are supposed to become self-sustaining and move out.
5. Is there a potential relationship with a College/University?
6. Are there enough investors of time and finances to sustain the incubator? These people are your best potential mentors.

*Tennessee Example: Cumberland Business Incubator,*  
[www.cumberlandincubator.com/history](http://www.cumberlandincubator.com/history)

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/IDEAS:**

### **Design Philosophy:**

Urbanism, new ruralism, traditional neighborhood development, pedestrian-oriented design, or any other similar term, and the meaning is basically the same: a design philosophy that places strong emphasis on designing at an intimate, human scale within the natural surroundings.

All communities have an urban fabric — or an area where development already exists. Such places should be a focus for new growth and redevelopment initiatives. That means that good urban design principles and guidelines can apply to any community no matter what the size or economic situation. By following these four guidelines, which coincide with smart growth principles, rural communities can recover their “sense of place,” and reestablish a pedestrian friendly environment. The guidelines are:

- Create usable, pedestrian-friendly spaces. Strive for public areas (e.g. “Main Street,” a town square, a neighborhood park or greenway) where neighbors can gather for events, exercise, and meet each other during the day.
- Put people first, not cars. We love our automobiles, and they are an important part of daily lives; however, they should not dominate the landscape. Neighborhood-scaled streets (narrow, tree-lined, on-street parking) and their connectivity should be emphasized rather than thoroughfares that simply enable high speed driving.
- Promote a mixture of land uses. Conventional zoning does not allow for this (unless there is a special “mixed use” zone). Communities need to adopt codes that are prescriptive—that is they tell applicants what the community would like to see rather than simply separating uses or regulating against certain uses.
- Create a pattern of development that follows a “transect” from urban core to rural preserve. See <http://www.ncsmartgrowth.org/Summit/NewTheory.pdf>

Tips for how to set up successful communities using design principles are in “Creating Great Neighborhoods: Density in Your Community.” Also, the Congress for New Urbanism has a variety of resources available on how to design walk able communities: <http://www.cnu.org>

**Trails around town:**

The expansion and improvement of the trails in town would add outdoor exercise opportunities. Trails used for walking or jogging could be inexpensively made from waste wood chips. Exercise stations are often spaced along these trails for those so inclined. Trails are an inexpensive tourist attraction. The National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program provides technical and planning assistance to states, communities and conservation organizations for a wide variety of trail, river, and greenway projects. NPS staff works cooperatively with local trail groups, conservation organizations, and state agencies on greenways, rail-trails, river corridors, publications and workshops.

The National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/>

Many foundations support conservation initiatives, including trails and greenways development. For example: American Greenways Awards / Conservation Fund.

This Fund offers non-profit organizations, public agencies, and individuals from \$500 to \$2,500 to stimulate the planning and implementation of greenways in communities throughout America. Contact the American Greenways Coordinator

The Conservation Fund,

(703) 525-6300 (1800 North Kent St., Suite 1120, Arlington, VA 22209),

[www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org)

**Other Funding Opportunities:**

Key Contact Information:

National Trust for Historic Preservation

1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20036

(202) 588-6219

Web: <http://www.aminst.org>

National Arbor Day Foundation

An option to purchase trees cheaply is to join the National Arbor Day Foundation. It is only \$10 to join and with the membership you get 10 free trees and a book on how to care for them. It would also be possible to look into becoming a certified Tree City.

Key Contact Information:

National Arbor Day Foundation

100 Arbor Avenue

Nebraska City, NE 68410

Toll Free: 1-888-448-7337

[www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)

Information about private foundation assistance:

[www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org)

## USDA/Rural Development

[www.rurdev.usda.gov/](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/)

Federal Funding Sources for Rural Areas

[www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/funding/federalfund/fed03.html](http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/funding/federalfund/fed03.html)

The Tennessee Department of Transportation oversees the annual distribution of millions of dollars in grant funds awarded to both statewide and local transportation-related projects.

[www.tdot.state.tn.us/local/grants.htm](http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/local/grants.htm) Current grant projects are listed below. The following are the grant programs through TDOT:

- [Aeronautics Grants](#)
- [Biofuel Green Island Corridor Grants](#)
- [Bridge Grants](#)
- [Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Grants](#) (CMAQ)
- [Governor's Highway Safety Office Grants](#)
- [Litter Grants](#)
- [Local Program Grants](#) (Interchange Lighting, Optional Safety, Local Interstate Connectors (LICs), State Industrial Highways (SIAs))
- [Roadscapes Grants](#)
- [Safe Routes to School](#)
- [Transit Program Grants](#)
- [Truck Stop Electrification Technology Grants](#)

TDOT administered grants, as they are awarded, are announced through news releases posted in the TDOT Media Room. [www.tennessee.gov/tdot/news/](http://www.tennessee.gov/tdot/news/)

The 2012 Transportation Enhancement application will be available July 1, 2011. The new application will be required for all submittals including re-submittals.

TDOT will accept applications electronically at [tdot.enhancements@tn.gov](mailto:tdot.enhancements@tn.gov). The electronic submission must still include the scanned signature of the applicable Mayor or State Agency Head as well as all necessary detailed maps, photographs, preliminary sketches, plans and support letters. **Please note that only Word, PDF and JPG documents will be accepted for electronic submissions.**

## Tennessee USDA State Office

Rural Development Housing and Community Facilities Programs are designed to develop essential community facilities for public use in rural areas. These facilities include schools, libraries, childcare, hospitals, medical Clinics, Five-Year Follow Up Community Assessment, clinics, assisted living facilities, fire and rescue stations, police stations, community centers, public buildings and transportation.

Contact:

State Office

3322 West End Ave., Suite 300

Nashville, TN 37203

615-783-1350

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/TN>

#### The Conservation Fund

Kodak American Greenways Program provides small grants to create or enhance greenways.

Contact:

Jen White

(703) 525-6300

Email: [jwhite@conservationfund.org](mailto:jwhite@conservationfund.org)

[http://www.conservationfund.org/kodak\\_awards](http://www.conservationfund.org/kodak_awards)

### **The Tennessee Brownfields Renewal Process – Downtown Renovation**

What are Brownfields?

Brownfields are abandoned or underutilized properties, including but not limited to industrial and commercial facilities, where redevelopment or expansion may be complicated by possible environmental contamination (real or perceived). Brownfields are officially defined by the federal government in: **The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of January 11, 2002, (—Federal Brownfields Law)** as any "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant." These sites have infrastructure in place and represent untapped potential for small towns. Reinvesting in these areas can boost the local economy, provide entry level jobs that workers can easily travel to by foot or bicycle, and slow outward sprawl-type growth.

Specific examples of sites which could qualify as Brownfields include:

- abandoned gas stations,
- old factory and mill complexes,
- foundries,
- junkyards,
- mine-scarred lands, and
- other under-utilized or abandoned properties.

The Brownfields renewal process five (5) steps:

- Step 1: Site Identification and Project Planning  
This section provides guidance on how to identify Brownfields properties in your community, how to develop a revitalization plan to address those properties, and how to initiate project planning.
- Step 2: How to Determine if you have Contamination on your Site
- Step 3: Cleaning up your Site
- Step 4: How the Tennessee Brownfields Program can help when a Site is Contaminated
- Step 5: The End of the Line – Redevelopment of your Brownfields!

[www.tn.gov/environment/dor/toolbox/pdf/TennesseeBrownfieldsRedevelopmentRoolbox.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/environment/dor/toolbox/pdf/TennesseeBrownfieldsRedevelopmentRoolbox.pdf)

The Tennessee Toolbox summarizes some of the federal tools available nationwide. In this section, you are provided information on programs, incentives, guidance, funding and other tools available to local governments by TDEC. In this section information is provided on how a local government can best access the available federal tools and incentives.

Finally, the Toolbox contains a list of useful documents and a comprehensive glossary of Brownfields-related terms and acronyms. The referenced documents and glossary provide you with additional information you can use to better understand the issues and terminology often encountered during the Brownfields redevelopment process.

Make your dollar go for more in your locally owned and operated store: A 2002 study from Civic Economics found that for every \$100 spent in a chain retail store, the economic impact in the community is \$13.

For every \$100 spent at a local store, \$45 is the economic impact locally.

[http://www.civiceconomics.com/Lamar\\_Retail\\_Analysis\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.civiceconomics.com/Lamar_Retail_Analysis_Executive_Summary.pdf)

Visit the NC Metropolitan Coalition's website to view Jim Johnson's (Director of UNC's Urban Investment Strategies Center) presentation on Creating Sustainable Communities in an Era of Economic Uncertainty and Global Insecurity:

<http://www.ncmetros.org/sustainablecommunities.pdf>

#### 'TND' Guidelines

In 2000, the N.C. Department of Transportation published its "Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines," which serves to promote human-scale, walk able communities. This document is readily available. Download at

<http://www.doh.dot.state.nc.us/operations/tnd.pdf>

#### In Rural By Design,

Randall Arendt advocates for land-use planning techniques to preserve open space and community character. About \$60. from the American Planning Association at

<http://www.planning.org/bookservice/description.htm?BCODE=ARDP>

The Brookings Institution released Investing in a Better Future: A Review of the Fiscal and Competitive Advantages of Smarter Growth Development Patterns.

[http://www.brookings.edu/urban/publications/200403\\_smartgrowth.htm](http://www.brookings.edu/urban/publications/200403_smartgrowth.htm)

### **SMART GROWTH**

The term "smart growth" refers to the principles, best practices, and tools that can help guide growth that results in greater community choices and benefits.

#### What Smart Growth Means ...

- Smart growth means more transportation choices (pedestrians included)
- Smart growth means more vibrant cities, suburbs, towns, and rural areas.
- Smart growth means a variety of housing options (single family homes, apartments, Townhomes, homes above retail shops, garage apartments and more).
- Smart growth means wise community investments that improve quality of life for all

The goal of smart growth is to simultaneously accommodate growth within any community while enhancing the economy, protecting the environment, and preserving or improving quality of life for citizens in an equitable manner. In short, its intent is to provide more choices to address present and future growth and development challenges.

Growth is “smart” when it arises from a process that engages community members in active discussion about how to accommodate growth while avoiding unnecessary burdens on infrastructure, inequitable distribution of public assets and rapid loss of farmland and open space.

Success of smart growth policies requires that all stakeholders — landowners, planners, conservationists, developers, government officials, business leaders, agriculturists, citizen advocates, and others — work together to overcome the challenges associated with the changing community landscape. It is about who is making the decisions for what and where the community builds next.

Smart growth refers to a pattern of development that accommodates a diversity of people and incomes, housing types and jobs, and makes efficient use of public investments — it is the antithesis of sprawl.

Smart growth recognizes the mistakes of past planning practices that separated land uses, such as residential, commercial, and job centers. When development is encouraged in areas that are most value-enhancing and other public services already exist) and away from areas that are more costly (especially where there is potential for natural hazards, e.g. coastal edges, flood plains, and very steep slopes), growth is smart.

Today, community advocates increasingly are recognizing that what people want is what smart growth is intended to achieve: walk able neighborhoods with a variety of housing options, regional transportation systems that mean individuals can choose how to get around (rather than having to drive everywhere), and community strategic plans designed to locate facilities centrally, preserve regional history, and encourage citizen participation in decision-making processes. ☐

#### Smart Growth in Small Communities

A barrier to comprehensive planning efforts or smart growth initiatives in small communities is the amount of resources required to do the job. However, communities of all sizes can overcome these challenges by:

- Bringing the community together to envision future growth;
- Elected officials and other citizens engaging in leadership training opportunities
- ECD’s (Tennessee Economic & Community Development) Local Planning Assistance Office provides planning and technical services to communities on a contract basis. From regional offices in Chattanooga, Cookeville, Jackson, Johnson City, Knoxville and Nashville, professional land use planners can help communities with planning, zoning, National Flood Insurance Program compliance and other advisory services.



## The 10 Principles of Smart Growth:

1. Mixed-Use Communities – allow and encourage development to be built in such a way that it creates or builds upon activity-rich centers where homes are close to where residents spend leisure time, shop, and work.
2. Appropriate Pattern of Development – build development where infrastructure and public services is in place; where it is out of harm's way of potential natural disasters; and in a way that enhances the unique character of a community.
3. Green Space – protect farmland and natural areas such as forests and waterways so that communities are beautiful, economies are strong, environments are healthy and recreation opportunities are varied and enjoyable.
4. Walk able Communities – build transportation systems with the pedestrian and bicyclist in mind, allowing freedom of mobility to a much broader range of the population.  
Create a pedestrian and bike plan. Officially adopting a plan that indicates where the greatest needs and opportunities are for biking and walking will help to allocate funds and provide an organized way to gradually but systematically convert your town to a Walk able one.
5. Integrated Transportation – provide a variety of transportation choices, that are seamlessly connected.
6. Enhanced Civic Realm – create and maintain distinctive public or institutional buildings and spaces (plazas, public squares, parks, etc.) that people can conveniently use and take pride in.
7. Affordable Living – provide housing choices for residents of all income levels, and locate homes near transportation, shopping and recreation options.
8. Shared Benefits – collaborate regionally so that resources are shared and benefits are distributed.
9. Community Collaboration – encourage a wide range of stakeholders to participate in all development decisions that a community makes.
10. Fairness in Making Development Decisions – make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.

These principles can be the platform for growth discussions in communities that are in various stages of development including visioning and planning, building, or even re-thinking current growth strategies.

<http://www.ncsmartgrowth.org/principles.html>.

## BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING SMART GROWTH

While the intent of growth policies and zoning ordinances might be to create a comprehensive plan for growth, many requirements like minimum lot sizes, required sewer extensions, and fragmented open space requirements create more sprawl. There are several factors that combine to create rural sprawl; it is the result of thousands of individual decisions that are made within a framework of local government land controls and local, state and federal tax policies and spending programs.

Some of the most influential include:

- individual tastes and preferences;
- lack of visionary leadership;
- exclusionary zoning practices;



- federal mortgage interest deduction;
- lack of or weak local planning and implementation;
- state and federal highway programs;
- financial institutions lending criteria; and
- NIMBYism.

Smart Growth information from <http://www.ncsmartgrowth.org/toolkit37>

The following are cited from: Healthy Rural Communities: A Resource and Action Guide for North Carolina, *Healthy Rural Communities: A Resource and Action Guide*, Cara Crisler and Marge Anders Limbert, [www.activelivingbydesign.org](http://www.activelivingbydesign.org)

### **CROSSROAD PLANNING**

An example of a crossroad development is a large subdivision that springs up among farm fields, near roadside rural businesses such as a general store or an auto repair garage. As more people move into the subdivision, other retail outlets pop up, and very quickly, a sprawling automobile-dependent community develops along the intersection.

One strategy that encourages a sense of community and diversity in these areas is to engage citizens in small, area-specific discussions on their vision for the future of their own community. The small area plan is a guide for decision makers on a wide variety of issues such as appropriate land uses, creation of scenic corridors, and capital improvements plan investments. The end product is a planning and implementation document. This process provides an opportunity to encourage mixed-use and compact development for defined geographic areas. A good resource guide for this activity can be found in Chapter 8 of “Blueprint Denver,” on the web (see <http://www.denvergov.org>).

### **METRO FRINGE COMMUNITIES**

Across the nation, much of the current growth is occurring in small municipalities located on the fringe of larger metropolitan areas. The population explosion may be exciting in terms of economic growth potential and lower unemployment rates; yet the way this growth takes shape must be approached cautiously. The small towns and rural communities facing the strongest growth pressures are those that abut larger metropolitan areas. The general trends facing metro-fringe communities are:

- Waves of new residential growth result from job base expansion;
- Local governments face fiscal burdens due to a need to provide infrastructure (wider roads, water, sewer, schools, etc.);
- Open space is sacrificed for development of subdivisions and shopping districts;
- Communities struggle to maintain farm and forest land, historical values, culture of the region, and general quality of life;
- Big box stores and large parking lots proliferate due to the presence of high-capacity streets and highways;

- Increased school enrollment affects the quality of student educational experiences as a result of lower per-pupil expenditures, fewer support staff and/or teachers, and fewer training opportunities for school staff;
- Increased traffic congestion, longer commutes, more vehicle miles traveled per person, and degraded roads;
- Higher property taxes, often to support bond referendums to build more schools and roadways;
- Changing economic base as rural agricultural communities turn into “bedroom communities.”
- Deterioration of downtowns as highway development spreads the community outward;
- Large development projects built on land outside of town because low-priced land is attractive to developers;
- Lack of regional planning and competition with nearby communities.

Metro-fringe communities have recorded lost farmland of more than 40% since 1969. Local governments have the authority to enact farmland preservation and easement programs to offset these losses. An additional benefit is the rise in land value of adjacent properties.

### **OPEN SPACE AS HAZARD MITIGATION**

When a neighborhood is repeatedly flooded, it can be less expensive in the long run for the government unit to buy the properties (using grant monies or other funding sources), demolish the structures on the land, and preserve the resulting area as open space. This serves the purpose of preventing disaster resulting from flood, preserving open space for community use and recreation, and mitigating the impacts of flooding by providing natural buffers to the built environment.

### **LAND TRUSTS**

Land trusts are non-profit organizations that help people and communities find ways to save the places they love. Through land trusts, people from all walks of life, including landowners, business people, farmers, and organizations, can work together to help protect and shape the future landscape. There is tax incentives associated with protecting land from development

### **TRAFFIC CALMING**

Traffic is a funny thing – communities that have it generally want less of it, while communities that don’t have it recognize that strong economies are associated with busy-ness and may wish for more, especially in the central business district. Assuming that some traffic is a good thing, it does not mean that traffic is synonymous with bad congestion. With good street design that includes attention to detail, traffic can be calmed. Some examples of important design elements are:

- buildings placed at the sidewalk’s edge
- parking lots at side or rear of buildings
- tree-lined streets
- marked crosswalks
- on-street parking
- narrower traffic lanes
- sidewalks and benches

- boulevard streets
- intersections that slow (but don't stop) vehicles such as roundabouts
- visually interesting streets
- bike lanes

**Tennessee ECD's Local Planning Assistance Office can:**

- **Provide help drafting ordinances.**
- **Train community officials.**
- **Provide site reviews to communities.**
- **Provide mapping services.**
- **Provide resources to codes administrators, surveyors, engineers, lenders, insurance agents, realtors, developers and property owners.**

*To learn more about the Local Planning Assistance Office, call (615) 741-2211.*

Mary Randolph  
Wyoming Rural Development Council  
214 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
307-777-6430  
[Mary.randolph@wyo.org](mailto:Mary.randolph@wyo.org)

## **Introduction**

I don't think I can begin to thank the citizens of Lewisburg, Tennessee for the hospitality shown to us during this Community Assessment. I enjoyed working with Greg Lowe and the planning team to develop this assessment for the community. The accommodations at Celebration Inn were great and the food! I had the best fried chicken of my life and I am now buying red velvet cakes at Nothin Bundt Cake™ in Denver, Colorado. I have watched the movie "Footloose" several times and when I do I sure think of Lewisburg and the great time we had.

You have a great community – full of good people, great infrastructure, incredible educational facilities, natural resources and many opportunities ahead of you. It is my hope that this process was beneficial for you and we have provided you with some ideas to move forward.

We look forward to working with you in the future!

## **THEME: Downtown Square**

**Challenge:** Lewisburg has one of those great town square downtowns with wonderful historic properties and great opportunities. I was very glad to hear that your community is working toward being a Main Street Community through your State Main Street program. I was also very pleased that you have a group of people that are committed and dedicated to revitalizing your downtown. Revitalizing Main Street is a long process – it does not happen overnight and by aligning yourself with the Main Street program you have a wealth of resources at your disposal.

**Solution #1:** There is no quick solution for the Downtown Square, but I do encourage you to utilize the 4 point approach in your planning; move toward protection of the historic properties by potentially developing a façade grant program; host events and activities in your downtown and develop a shop local program.

Brian has addressed the historic properties and given you very good information and resources for your downtown, so I will not repeat. However I do offer this resource and I hope someone in Lewisburg will take advantage of the offer:

The Wyoming Main Street program for the past 6 years has facilitated what we call the "Pre-trip" to the National Main Street conference. We invite our Main Street managers, boards, volunteers and business owners to travel to the National Conference 3 days in advance – we rent a bus (or 2!) and travel to 3 Main Street communities in the conference state and visit with their

boards and managers; tour their downtowns, learn about their projects and find out what works and what does not work in their communities. We invite anyone to attend this pre-trip. April 12-13, 2013 we will be in Louisiana for the pre-trip and then the conference begins on the 14<sup>th</sup>. I would offer a scholarship for someone from Lewisburg to attend out pre-trip. It is an incredible learning experience and will give you many ideas to implement in your downtown. Have someone call me or Britta Fuller, our program manager.

**Contact:**

Britta Fuller, Main Street Program Manager

[Britta.fuller@wyo.gov](mailto:Britta.fuller@wyo.gov)

307-777-2934

**Solution #2:** During the listening sessions regarding Downtown Square, increased art and culture was a reoccurring theme. I direct you again to the National Main Street program and the idea of creating an art district The March/April 2012 edition of the Main Street Now magazine was dedicated to Arts and Entertainment Districts. It can be found on line at:  
<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/main-street-now/>



**THEME: Community/Government Leadership**

**Challenge:** Over and over in the listening session we heard that leadership in Lewisburg is a “good ole boy network”. That might be indicative of the south and just part of the culture, but it does make for frustration and lack of community support and respect for leadership. I share with you the Eight Challenges Facing Community Leaders from the Heartland Center for Leadership Development.

1. Doing more with less: Leaders discover that community needs and expectations far exceed available financial resources.
2. Mandates from above: Unfunded mandates from state or federal government further complicate the fiscal challenges that a community leader’s face.

3. The rapids of change: Today's leader is like someone riding a boat through rapids, where little known about the dangers that lay ahead. Today's changes come at an increasingly faster pace and with unpredictable complications.
4. Complexity of issues: Leaders today face numerous complex challenges
5. Economic realities: Today's economic realities can understandably cause community leaders to throw up their hands in frustration and as they try to help their town charts a path toward a successful future.
6. Social and cultural unrest: An influx of new residents from different cultures can cause social and cultural unrest.
7. Loss of confidence in institutions: Lack of respect for authority is pervasive in our society.
8. Fear of assassination: Today's leaders must learn to live without constant approval and people trying to take them down a notch or attempt to remove them from office.

**Solution #1:** I don't think any organization in Lewisburg would suffer from having leadership training and you might even consider a long-term program developed by the Heartland Center, It is Leadership program focused on 4 "pillars": increasing community capacity, nurturing entrepreneurs, building charitable assets and engaging youth. A program such as this would focus on many of the leadership and other issues we heard in the listening sessions.

**Resource:**

Heartland Center for Leadership Development  
3110 N. 40<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite A  
Lincoln, NE 68504  
Phone: 402-474-7667  
[www.heartlandcenter.info](http://www.heartlandcenter.info)

**Solution #2:** There is a lack of youth involvement in community leadership and you should have some great opportunity to involve youth especially having a college located right in your community.

I suggest you find youth to serve on boards, whether or not you allow them to have voting rights or just have them on the board for fresh ideas and to give them future leadership experience, it is a good idea. On my board, we have a youth representative with a 1 year term. After that term we present them with a scholarship - \$500.

Also, create a youth council. Many communities utilize youth councils that serve with the city council – they again bring a very fresh perspective and you give them experience and the opportunity to grow leadership in your community.

### Resource:

Many communities in the country have youth councils and here are a few web sites to those communities:

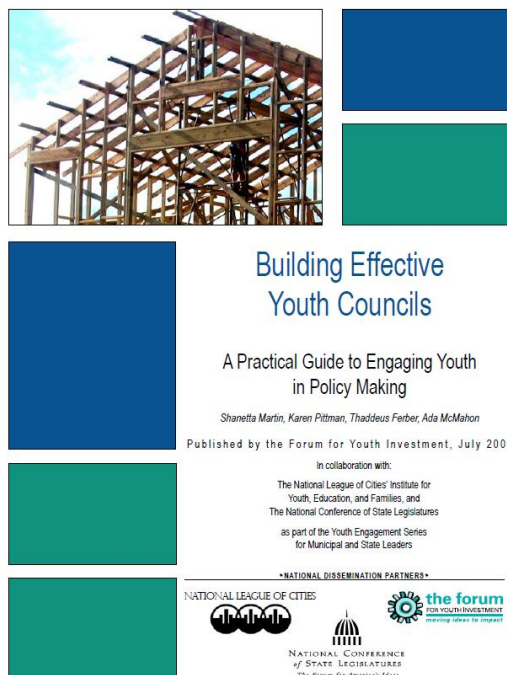
<http://www.wvc-ut.gov/index.aspx?NID=438>

<http://www.worcesterma.gov/announcements/city-officials-induct-youth-council-members>

<http://www.the-dispatch.com/article/20120816/NEWS/120819980>

and this manual on building youth councils which can be found at:

<http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=15&ved=0CDkOFjAEOAo&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nlc.org%2Fdocuments%2FFind%2520City%2520Solutions%2FIYEF%2FYouth%2520Civic%2520Engagement%2Fbuilding-effective-youth-councils-fyi-gid-jul07.pdf&ei=kEU5UPb4Kc3qiQK4yoGwDw&usg=AFQjCNFd93SsRx6wyxPkHuBEfSVoObaWVA>



## **THEME: Communication**

**Challenge:** The issues surrounding communication in the community seemed to be many – most importantly citizens do not feel informed. In addition broadband was an issue.

### **Solution #1: Broadband**

Tennessee, as the rest of the country, participated in an ARRA funded program from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). Tennessee received \$2.3M from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service. Your program is called “Connect Tennessee”. There are many programs and services that are available to communities – it is a great resource to your community.

#### **Resources:**

<http://www.connectedtn.org/>

Connected Tennessee  
618 Church Street, Suite 305  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
615-242-9508  
[info@connectedtn.org](mailto:info@connectedtn.org)

**Solution #2:** An organization in Lewisburg might create a community calendar to help with communication. An idea that was implemented in Laramie Wyoming. There is a software company out of Laramie, Wyoming called Happy Jack Software that has created a community calendar that any participating organization can upload any information and activities to a common community calendar.

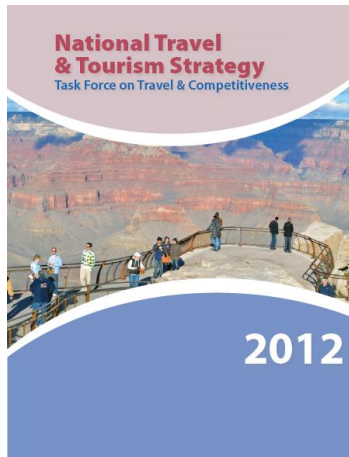
#### **Resource:**

<http://www.happyjacksoftware.com/>

**Additional Suggestions:** I have a few other ideas and suggestions that might not fit under one of the identified major themes, but I still think they may be good resources for Lewisburg.

#1. May 2012 is National Tourism Month. Also in that month, President Obama released the National Travel and Tourism Strategy that charts a course toward making America a more attractive and accessible destination than ever before. The report is good and might give ideas on a local level to enhance tourism.





**#2.** I found an interesting organization that might be very beneficial for Superior to consider contacting. Local Government Commission. This organization has some very interesting tools for community planning. They provide survey instruments and they offer services to assist communities in planning, both in community design and healthy communities.

<http://www.lgc.org/about/index.html>

**Benjamin (Ben) Washington, Jr.**  
**Community and Economic Development**  
**Development Resources and Research, LLC**  
**P. O. Box 11917**  
**Columbia, SC 29211**  
**Phone: (803) 917-6088**  
**[Benjaminjwjr@aol.com](mailto:Benjaminjwjr@aol.com)**

**Introduction:** During the Community Assessment Team visit to Lewisburg from April 9-12, 2012, I was introduced to local City and County leaders across the major areas of both the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County. I saw first-hand both a sincere concern and a genuine interest by local citizens for the future of Lewisburg, and how the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County can rebound from nearly a decade of economic uncertainty. Simply put, the departure of several major corporations between 2000 and 2006, and the impact of broad changes in the national economy have left the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County in a state of persistent economic and social decline. The problems associated with changes in the economy has had a devastating effect on the major population subgroups of the town, thus calling for an immediate need for local leadership to be willing to look inward and develop a comprehensive, prioritized strategy to re-define Lewisburg, and undertake strategic community and economic development initiatives that will make both Lewisburg and Marshall County, a viable local and regional community partner.

As one of five participants on the Assessment Team, I was impressed with the overall quality of the local leadership, and the willingness of those leaders and local citizens to share a genuine concern for the long term best interest of the City of Lewisburg and its residents. Of key importance for the future of Lewisburg, will be the willingness of those in leadership to be forward thinking about Lewisburg's future. This would include working collaboratively with Marshall and surrounding Counties to develop mutually beneficial short and long term projects with meet City and community needs. Lewisburg can no longer view itself as an isolated City, but will need to be diligent in collaborating at the multi-county regional and state level.

### **Major Themes**

#### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WITH PRIORITIES**

**Need for Comprehensive Planning With Prioritized Planning Components** – the economic problems associated with the departure of major corporations, and uncontrollable changes within both the national and Tennessee economy during the decade from the early to middle of 2000's has created several impacts locally. First, the loss of several hundred higher wage jobs in the manufacturing sector has led to systemic, long term unemployment and the subsequent reduction of the tax base to provide for local services. An examination of 2005-2011 statistical data from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development shed light on the magnitude of this problem, and its impact on area residents:

**Chart 1: Lewisburg, Marshall County, and Regional Annual Average Unemployment Rates**

	<b>Annual Average Unemployment Rates</b>						
<b>County</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Tennessee</b>	9.2	9.7	4.9	6.7	10.5	5.2	5.6
<b>Lewisburg - Marshall County</b>	13.7	16.4	17.3	9.4	7.9	6.5	6.3
<b>Lewisburg Percentage of Tennessee Annual Average Unemployment Rate</b>	<b>148.9%</b>	<b>169.1%</b>	<b>353.1%</b>	<b>140.3%</b>	<b>75.2%</b>	<b>125.0%</b>	<b>112.5%</b>
Bedford	10.5	11.6	12.2	6.8	4.9	5.3	5.4
Giles	10.8	12.8	15.0	8.1	6.4	7.2	7.3
Lincoln	6.1	6.5	7.2	5.0	3.6	4.2	4.8
Marshall	13.7	16.4	17.4	9.3	7.7	6.4	6.5
Maury	12.1	14.4	13.8	8.2	8.0	5.5	6.0

Secondly since 2007, the delayed impact of job losses in higher wage manufacturing and trade sectors from earlier in the decade has left a current workforce characterized with skill sets that do not match the current available pool of jobs within Lewisburg, Marshall County, and the six-county region. This is evidenced by the excessively high annual average unemployment rates for Lewisburg and Marshall County. This has perpetuated a climate of out-migration of [higher-income, higher skilled] residents leaving the County for work. Based on a review of state and regional employment and training agency data, the State of Tennessee Department of Employment and Workforce Development designated Lewisburg and Marshall County as a Labor Surplus Area.

**Solution:** The effect of longer term unemployment has created a set of competing concerns, each tied to components of both the local, County and regional economy. To reverse the negative forces that are causing the local area to stagnate and decline, both City of Lewisburg and Marshall County officials will need to develop a comprehensive planning process to meet the challenges of the future. The Comprehensive Plan should indeed reflect an inclusive process of all socioeconomic groups and special populations, and must include the development of major implementation milestones of one, two and five years.

The five year planning window could with sincere cooperation by City and Marshall County officials, result in the development of projects that can generate short term successes. This, I feel would enable local leaders to develop the immediate need to realistically work together for the common good of the entire community, and not get discouraged about economic conditions beyond its immediate control. The Comprehensive Plan should form the basis of collaboration while seeking to develop realistic projects around the following areas:

- 1. Industrial Recruitment and the Creation and Attraction of Livable-Wage Jobs**
- 2. Career Workforce Development [Re-]Training of Lewisburg Residents**
- 3. Entrepreneurial Development**
- 4. The Identification of and the Addressing of Social Issues Impacting the Local Image of Lewisburg, Marshall County, and its Regional Development**

Where possible, the generation of short term planning successes should drive the basis for selecting strategic projects within the four areas listed above. The goal would be for leadership to work together on significant projects that can be successfully implemented. Short-term projects would need to be prioritized and the proper state, private foundation and federal funding resources can be secured for the implementation of projects within a time frame of three years or less. Longer term projects can be prioritized next with establishment of an implementation time frame of seven, ten and twenty year time frame. The recurring challenge to the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County will be the immediate development of the Comprehensive Plan and the buy-in of the political leadership and the broader community. The political leadership will then need to speak with one voice and keep the local community informed. Informing the community must include participation of all population sub-classes (majority, minority, seniors, veterans, public assistance, and youth) while simultaneously allowing community residents to actively participate and have a say in their own collective futures.

**Industrial Recruitment Through Infrastructure Development** – a major challenge brought forth during the Community listening sessions are the changing needs and uses for the present system of roads within the City. City officials again are grappling with questions of how to best maintain the current roads from the elements in a cost-efficient and cost effective manner (from rain and winter snow), while also accounting for new demands placed on it by both local year round residents, and working families. Also important is the need for City officials to address the competing needs and uses of the road system for normal traffic and develop an expansion plan.

**Solution:** Simply stated, road, water and sewer infrastructure costs continue to escalate. One asset that the City has is visionary people who care about the future direction of the City, and its ability to garner resources to meet the infrastructure needs of the population. City officials can explore the following programs below to help address water and sewer infrastructure needs. An important first step will be to undertake an examination of the current demographic characteristics of the City to identify more clearly who lives in City of Lewisburg, and how they utilize the current infrastructure. For planning purposes, at a minimum, an examination of peak time traffic counts for the major roads entering the City of Lewisburg is needed. Also, a brief windshield study of pedestrian and recreation uses could also be examined. This would focus on permanent residents, working families who commute out of the county for work, as well as individuals from surrounding counties that commute into Marshall County for work on a daily

basis, as well as other visitors to the community. The findings from these two pieces of information can be incorporated into the transportation component of the comprehensive plan. Local officials can [then] utilize the information to develop [fundable] projects of short duration which will address immediate needs.

**Resources:**

**Contact(s) For Rural Development and Infrastructure**

USDA Rural Development – Lawrenceburg Area Office

Faye Rodgers – Rural Development Specialist

237 Waterloo Street

Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

[Faye.Rogers@tn.usda.gov](mailto:Faye.Rogers@tn.usda.gov)

Phone: (931) 762-6913 x 4

Phone: (800) 342-3149 x 1494

United States Department of Agriculture

Tennessee State Office

3322 West End Avenue – Suite 300

Nashville, TN 37203

Phone: (615) 783-1300

Phone: (800) 342-3149 x 1300

Tennessee Department of Transportation – Region 3

Local Program Development Office

James K. Polk Building

505 Deaderick Street – Suite 700

Nashville, TN 37243

**Time Frame(s) for Implementation**

**Road Infrastructure Project Implementation** – The prioritization of minimizing the fiscal cost impacts of the existing road system repairs will need to continue over the next two to five years while City officials continue to identify and secure grant and low interest loan funding from the state of Tennessee and eligible federal sources to expand the current road system along the major arteries entering into Lewisburg and Marshall County.

Within the next two to five years, City of Lewisburg and Marshall County officials will also want to take into consideration the expansion of projects in Region 3. Some of these projects are slated to begin in 2013. An examination of Region 3 Transportation Project Information from the Tennessee Department of Transportation shows that the state will undertake a minimum of three regional road projects including the widening of Interstate 65 that could have a direct impact on Marshall and surrounding regional counties. These projects include:

- **Interstate 65 Improvements (Williamson County)**
- **State Road 840 South (Williamson County)**
- **State Route 397/Mack Hatcher Parkway (Williamson County)**

An examination of the Tennessee Department of Transportation information reveals that the I-65 Improvement project to relieve congestion could be one in which City and County officials may want to partner with regional officials on. Some comments provided during the listening sessions regarding the completion of existing projects and the development of new projects desired by City residents.

In addition to the I-65 widening project, the development of a sufficient road infrastructure for the City of Lewisburg is tied to current county and state planning and zoning regulations on one hand and the prioritization of road projects by types of use on the other. Both the City of Lewisburg and the Marshall County leadership should work together to obtaining input from residents going forward. Each side can use this information and feedback to give to transportation planners at the Region 3 level. This will help to determine how to best develop a system of roads to meet competing residential, recreational, commercial business and economic development needs.

Equally important to expanding the road infrastructure is what rights of way, zoning changes and other impacts would need to occur in regards to the provision of water and sewer infrastructure. Input from residents on the need(s) pertaining to road infrastructure, water and sewer expansion can be obtained by way of surveys and information meetings with residents. Road infrastructure expansion and maintenance projects can be shared with the community in public meetings by Lewisburg, Marshall County and Tennessee Department of Transportation officials with priorities and projects displayed by short term (2 to 5 years), intermediate (ten years) and long term (20 years), as well as information provided to residents on sources of funding and their share of the costs.

The chart below summarizes individual and joint roles and responsibilities pertaining to water, sewer, and road infrastructure project initiatives.

**Recommended Roles and Responsibilities:  
Infrastructure for the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County, TN**

<b>City of Lewisburg</b>	<b>Marshall County</b>	<b>Regional Partners</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to seek grant and low interest loans for current major roads entering Lewisburg and Marshall County.</li> <li>• Work with Marshall County and Regional County partners on regional projects that would assist with industrial recruitment (2 to 5 years).</li> <li>• Identify short term grant funding list of projects for two to five years to maintain current infrastructure and to ensure success. This would help ensure that community residents would be more likely to support these efforts.</li> <li>• Work with City and County residents to develop short term (2-5 year), intermediate (6-10 year), and long term (11-20 year) infrastructure project list (based on one or more surveys).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Marshall County and other partners on long range infrastructure planning projects (5 and 10 year projects).</li> <li>• Work closely with TDOT and USDA Rural Development on joint funding initiatives related to road infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with surrounding counties on long range (10 to 20 year) infrastructure projects that will fosters economic development, industry and workforce development and increase regional in-migration of livable wage jobs into Marshall, Maury and Williamson Counties.</li> <li>• Work together to prioritize infrastructure projects related to attracting industries with jobs that match current labor force.</li> <li>• Develop joint communication information on infrastructure uses and needs with City and County residents.</li> </ul>

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE [RE-] TRAINING OF RESIDENTS**

The City of Lewisburg has continued to experience long term unemployment throughout the past five years. This poses a major challenge to City and Marshall County Officials. An indirect consequence of long term unemployment has led to increases in substance use and a reliance on unemployment benefits and other forms of public assistance. During the listening sessions with several groups, individuals and families impacted by the decline in higher wage job opportunities expressed concerns about their own individual futures, as well as the collective future of Marshall County residents. The City of Lewisburg is presently at a point in time in which the City leadership and Marshall County officials will need to consider the development of a comprehensive economic and workforce development strategy. This strategy will need to incorporate a minimum of three components:

- (1) A workforce development, job training and entrepreneurial business strategy for existing working families.**
- (2) A commercial development, business recruitment and business retention strategy to [re-] capture local consumer and household expenditures from resident who benefit directly from workforce development training. Increased expenditures by local residents can help to restore and expand the City's tax base, and**
- (3) An economic development strategy, which capitalizes off of the City's recreational assets, as well as a revitalized approach to tourism for the City of Lewisburg. These activities can result in other spin-off activities which can bring in a mix of seasonal and permanent residents.**

**Challenges:** the City of Lewisburg's future economic viability and sustainability is tied to how well the leadership can capitalize off of its multiple assets. In particular, the City of Lewisburg has an excellent recreation department, and is known within the Region as a place that produces student athletes. The City also has a 9-hole golf course and other recreational amenities. These assets can be incorporated into a broader recreation and tourism plan that can assist in restoring the City and County as a place to take advantage of recreation opportunities and downtown tourism.

City officials will also need to utilize its current assets and work to capitalize on initiatives in the area of workforce development and skills retraining. This involves working on the local level on partnerships that would include the Marshall County School District, with its strong vocational manufacturing training program at the High School, Columbia State Community College, and a stronger tie to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

A clear delineation of responsibilities and roles should be identified as the City works together with to build consensus on each of the three economic development components of workforce development, commercial business recruitment and retention, and the economic development strategy. Communication of the strategy components to City and Community residents will also be essential to the overall success of any strategy efforts.



**Workforce Development and Working Families:** Two of the problems and challenges facing the City is the number of working families with children who commute outside of the county for work. This means that the local leadership, the public schools, and the Community College will need to formulate a cooperative strategy on job and skills [re-]training in order to address the lack of available, higher wage job and income earning opportunities within close proximity to the City of Lewisburg. A related issue of more importance to City officials deserving future consideration is not only where families work, but also where do they make the majority of their consumption purchases.

Without securing job training and other related workforce development opportunities, working families may feel permanently trapped with limited employment options. More importantly, without current information, City officials Marshall County may find it difficult to proactively document the extent of this problem and its impact on serving the needs of Community residents. Residents in turn, cannot contribute to the local tax base through consumption expenditures and other forms of tax payments to the local economy.

**Solution:** The development of a two to five year workforce development, job training, and job assistance solution for City residents will require the immediate validation of the total number of working families in the City, Marshall County (and surrounding community) their residence status (year round versus seasonal or other) and their specific training needs. Efforts should be made to identify employment and job training programs offered through the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. In addition to state job training programs, Lewisburg officials and Marshall County officials responsible for economic development, skills development of the local labor force should explore Technical Community College and Career Education Training Program Grants (TAACCCTP) offered through the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Officials and staff at the Tennessee Department of Employment and Workforce could provide assistance to local officials on strategies to secure these types of grants for working age adults.

### **Contacts For Workforce Development, Job Retraining and Industrial Recruitment:**

#### **Resources:**

**Training and Workforce Development** assistance is available through Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development also have two other program initiatives related to job training and improving workforce skills for adults: the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (ATAA). The ATAA is a retraining program for workers age 50 years old and over who have lost their job due to the relocation of jobs to overseas markets as a result of trade.

For more information, contact:

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
220 French Landing Drive  
Nashville, TN 37423

Other employment and training efforts for the state of Tennessee can be addressed through the following Workforce Development Division programs. Contact information is provided below.

<b>Workforce Development Division</b> <b>Ph: 615-741-1031</b>  <b>Susie Bourque, Assistant Administrator</b>	<b>E-Mail Contact Information</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dislocated Workers</li></ul>	<a href="mailto:SterlingvanderSpuy@tn.gov">SterlingvanderSpuy@tn.gov</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Faith Based &amp; Community Initiatives</li></ul>	<a href="mailto:Tyrone.W.Parker@tn.gov">Tyrone.W.Parker@tn.gov</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Incumbent Worker/Apprenticeship Programs</li></ul>	<a href="mailto:Patrick.Bleecker@tn.gov">Patrick.Bleecker@tn.gov</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Rapid Response</li></ul>	<a href="mailto:Joe.Fults@tn.gov">Joe.Fults@tn.gov</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Senior Community Service Employment Program</li></ul>	<a href="mailto:Simi.Atolagbe@tn.gov">Simi.Atolagbe@tn.gov</a>

A final resource in which the leadership of Lewisburg, Marshall County the public vocational school and Columbia State College may want to consider is the Lumina Foundation. The Lumina Foundation has a 2025 strategic initiative to increase the adult [Community] college retention and graduation rate to sixty percent or more. The Foundation seeks to establish grant partnerships with Community Colleges that want to help them to achieve their long term strategic mission. For more information contact:

Candace Brandt  
Lumina Foundation  
30 South Meridian Street, Suite 700  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-3503  
Phone: (317) 951-5300  
(800) 834-5756  
E-Mail: [http://www.luminafoundation.org/about\\_us/contact\\_us/](http://www.luminafoundation.org/about_us/contact_us/)

## **Commercial Development, Business Recruitment and Business Retention Strategy**

**Challenges:** The leadership of the City of Lewisburg is faced with a key set of decisions. Do we want the City to be only a recreation and tourism destination community?

Do we or can we grow the City and meet the current consumption and related need of residents through the attraction of new businesses and industry? What will business attraction mean in regards to the provision of increased municipal services? What strategic relationship and role can the City of Lewisburg, Marshall County and Regional officials have together in order to attract higher wage businesses to the City and Region? What strategic alliances should be formed with neighboring municipalities and counties? What steps will be taken by current leaders to develop a succession plan which will include growing new leadership with a vested interest in seeing Lewisburg grow and prosper as a viable city and regional partner. Each of these questions poses a challenge to the City of Lewisburg, Marshall County and its current leadership. The challenges posed by each question however, provides a unique set of opportunities for both sets of leadership to focus individually and jointly on formulating a business attraction, recruitment and retention strategy.

**Solution:** The feedback from Community residents during the listening sessions identified two key types of businesses needed for the City: (1) Commercial business to provide goods and services for year round residents and working families, and (2) New businesses in close proximity to the City (and surrounding communities) which pay livable wages, and can employ residents close-by without lengthy out-commuting distances to work.

Feedback obtained during the listening session by residents and City officials provided some information on the types of businesses desired to meet immediate demands. As a key component of the strategic planning process, businesses and industry can be targeted by size of industrial or retail (or commercial) establishment or service, as well as services provided to serve various segments of the community (youth, seniors, working families, cultural and recreational) while reducing the level of outmigration of the eligible working age population for employment opportunities outside of Lewisburg and Marshall County. A strategy can be devised by both City of Lewisburg and Marshall County officials, with input from the major civic organizations and everyday citizens which will aid in the implementation of a comprehensive business and industrial recruitment strategy for the area over a two to five year period.

### **Resources:**

Contact: In addition to follow-up community assistance provided through the Wyoming Business Council and the Needs Assessment Team, it is recommended that the Leadership of the City and Association survey residents at least once yearly to identify what specific business and services they would like to see located in their community. In addition, key community entities must also become an integral part in helping to re-stabilize the community. This information can be used to formulate a City of Lewisburg, Marshall County and Regional joint business recruitment strategy. Where possible, City officials may also want to work with county and regional officials.

## **Community, Asset Based Economic Development Strategy**

**Challenges:** The listening sessions provided the leadership of the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County with information on competing demands by City residents for the enhance growth of the community through commercial business and economic development. Feedback by residents, as well as admissions and comments from City employees emphasized the strong leadership, energy and desire by the Director of Economic Development to actively promote Lewisburg as a pro-business community with a trainable workforce, as well as an abundance of recreational opportunities in the area. This will require that leadership focus on a business and economic strategy. The business and economic development strategy and plan should include these suggested components:

- (1) **Infrastructure Growth and Maintenance Strategy** – this would include a prioritized listing of infrastructure and tax base enhancing projects. Short term, intermediate and long term projects can be developed based on respective timelines of two to five year, ten year, and twenty year projects.
- (2) **Tourism and Recreation Strategy** – this would include a strategy and prioritized listing of project initiatives to target seasonal and year round residents with interests in golf, swimming, baseball, outdoor concerts and cultural series, and equestrian activities centered around the Tennessee Walking Horse Museum.
- (3) **Family and Youth Leadership Development Related to Business Activities** – this would include any activities strategically targeting programs and business activities of enhancing life and job skills for working families, youth, veterans and seniors. It would also suggest business and entrepreneurial activities for these special populations.
- (4) **Coordination of Social and Human Services to Stabilize the Community** – this involves activities that will ensure that social and human services are better coordinated between agencies, that civic and religious organizations work in partnership to coordinate benevolent programs and resources for individuals and families in crisis.

**Solution:** The Wyoming Business Council (WBC) provides project assistance in two areas (1) Community Readiness – which aids communities in building the infrastructure to ready itself based on its strategy or action plan, and (2) Community Enhancement Projects – which assists the community in enhancing the community's aesthetic characteristics.

### **Resources:**

Contact:

Mary Randolph - Executive Director  
Wyoming Rural Development Council  
214 W. 15th Street  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Phone: (307) 777-6430

[www.wyomingrural.org](http://www.wyomingrural.org)

Typically, the development of a business and economic development strategy involves some strategic planning. The Wyoming Rural Development Council not only provides technical assistance through the conducting community needs assessments, but also has the Main Street Program. The Wyoming Rural Development Council can provide assistance to the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County in regards to its Main Street Program. Typically the state requires that a county government serve as the lead applicant. However, local municipal governments can serve as a joint applicant.

Also, where possible, the leadership group from the City of Lewisburg and the City of Lewisburg Association will want to continue to work with Wyoming Rural Development Council and the current Assessment Team.

**Solution: Tourism and Recreation Strategy** – In some cases, leaders may not view the incorporation of tourism as a viable economic development and business strategy. During the feedback obtained from the Community listening sessions, it was mentioned several times about the need to identify City of Lewisburg as a tourism and recreation destination. A short term strategy could focus on increasing opportunities in revitalizing the downtown area. The City could utilize its Town Theatre, and its location of existing specialty shops as an initial magnet to attract new visitors to Downtown Lewisburg. Efforts should be made by leadership to work collaboratively with downtown merchants, the local Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations and [the pursuit of] the Main Street Program. In this regard, some attention should be given by leadership to approaches that utilize other local organizations throughout the year as assets to an inclusionary approach to tourism and recreation. Year round activities however, would need to be, where possible coordinated and scheduled in a way that attracts maximum participation from residents who live outside of the county and Region. This would enable the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County to capture some additional tax base through local spending by visitors. In addition, this would involve a more concerted effort of coordinating cultural festivals for the different racial and ethnic populations of Lewisburg and Marshall County, and seeking out grants and other funds to improve tourism related infrastructure and marketing efforts tied to the City of Lewisburg's existing recreation resources. Technical and grant assistance and marketing expertise can be provided through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Recreation Educational Services Division.

Contact:

Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation  
401 Church Street  
L&C Tower  
Nashville, TN 37243  
(888) 891-TDEC (8332)  
[ask.tdec@tn.gov](mailto:ask.tdec@tn.gov)

**Tennessee Recreation Initiative Program (TRIP)** - The Tennessee Recreation Initiative Program (TRIP) apportions grant money to cities and counties who lack professional parks and recreational director and do not provide a comprehensive recreation delivery system in their community. These grants are a three-year commitment, \$50,000 grant matched by the communities.

**The Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** is a federally funded, state administered grant program. The RTP provides grant funding for land acquisition for trails, trail maintenance, trail construction, trail rehabilitation and for trail head support facilities. These funds are distributed in the form of an 80% grant with a 20% match.

Prior to contacting the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and pursuing any grant funding, officials from the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County, the Downtown Development Association or Chamber of Commerce may want to facilitate one or more meetings with community residents. These meetings could gather informal and survey input regarding the types of recreational and tourism activities viewed as important by community residents. This input and findings can be shared with City staff to obtain technical assistance, develop materials and receive marketing advice to promote the City as a recreation and tourism location.

**Solution: Family, Youth and Related Business Activities** – While the City officials can work closely with Marshall County on a joint Economic Development and Business Strategy, another key area of activities can focus on the identification of programs and activities for each of the City's major populations: youth, working families, and seniors. These activities should be considered in conjunction with recommendations provided by the Community Needs Assessment Team related to comprehensive plan components

The University of Tennessee can provide local governments with a range of programs to sustain and serve existing populations. Specifically, the University of Tennessee has Extension programs. One key program is the Sustainable Tennessee program. Offered through UT Extension, Sustainable Tennessee seeks to assist both urban and rural communities with traditional [agricultural] and related extension programs and outreach to communities. These programs of outreach should not be viewed as only serving rural or agricultural communities. These programs and services offered through UT Extension can be combined with other initiatives that serve youth, families and other special populations in the community.

The University of Tennessee also has the Creating a Rural Entrepreneurial System in Tennessee program. In this regard, Lewisburg is defined as a micro-urban city from the perspective of its geographic location away from Nashville, and its proximity to surrounding rural counties with more of a traditional agricultural base. This combination of characteristics can enable the City to already apply for and receive federal funding for jobs and workforce development training. CREST provides research and assistance to rural (and adjacent) urban communities in areas related to small business development and entrepreneurship. By developing strategic partnerships with Marshall and surrounding counties, the City of Lewisburg may be able to leverage both federal and private dollars over the long run, and secure project funding that provide incentives to attract businesses and potential industry to Lewisburg, as well as train the existing labor force for new jobs.

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Another untapped or sometimes overlooked resource within communities is local and Community Foundations. Community Foundations often provide funding for specific program activities, while also serving specialized needs at the community level. Foundation funding can also help leverage existing federal and state funding dollars which normally are limited to traditional brick and mortar infrastructure and building facilities projects.

Information provided during the listening sessions highlighted the need for the City and Marshall County leadership to provide more activities for youth, seniors, minorities and working families. Community and Business specific Foundations can help fill a specialized niche throughout the year. Foundation activities involving youth, working families and seniors focus in several areas including general and specialized job education, character education, social justice concerns, workforce development, entrepreneurship, health, and public and community service.

Contact:  
Tennessee Community Foundations  
The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee  
3833 Cleghorn Ave, Ste 400,  
Nashville, TN 37215-2519  
Phone: 888-540-5200 or 615-321-4939 or 615-327-2746 (fax)  
Website: <http://www.cfmt.org/explore/initiatives/>

**Solution: Coordination of Social and Human Services to Stabilize the Community** – during the visit to the City of Lewisburg, and listening to concerns of residents and employees of Lewisburg, several social service issues were voiced. These included, but were not limited to: (1) and increase in suicide among the population, (2) increasing prescription drug use, and (3) the reliance of the long term unemployed on traditional faith based and benevolent organizations for individual and family assistance. These social and human service problems were symptomatic of a depressed economy seeking to rebound from years of decline.

One short term solution would be for the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County to establish a county wide Social and Human Services Council. The Council could meet at least quarterly to discuss ways to coordinate social, human and benevolent services. The Council would consist of

City and County Human Service organizations: social or child and family services, substance abuse and mental health agencies, civic club representatives, clergy from the faith community, and non-traditional faith members. Efforts should also be made to include African-Americans, the Hispanic-Latino population, and other special racial and ethnic populations. Involvement of a broad cross-section of the community can enable the City of Lewisburg and Marshall County to address benevolent social and human services issues by reducing stigma and better coordinate a strategy free of misconceptions about certain groups. More importantly, the Council can facilitate ways to leverage existing resources without exhausting the resources of any one local agency, civic or faith organization or group of people.

One statewide entity in Tennessee which could help officials from the City of Lewisburg is the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network. Lewisburg and Marshall County is served through the South Central Region. The TSPN works closely with the Tennessee Department of Health, and also partners with the Jason Foundation to address suicide among youth. Involvement of the newly formed and sustained Social and Human Services Council would help to ensure that benevolent programs and resources for individuals and families in crisis are coordinated in an efficient and equitable manner.

Contact:

Scott Ridgeway – Executive Director  
Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network  
295 Plus Park Boulevard, Suite 201  
Nashville, TN 37217  
Phone: (615) 297-1077  
Fax: (615) 269-5413  
[tspn@tspn.org](mailto:tspn@tspn.org)

### **Time Frame(s) for Implementation**

Tourism and Recreation Strategy – this would include a strategy and prioritized listing of project initiatives to target seasonal and year round residents with interests in golf, swimming, baseball, outdoor concerts and cultural series, and equestrian activities centered around the Tennessee Walking Horse Museum. These should be placed on a two, five and ten year timeline with a strategy to secure appropriate funding. Local government tax increases should be delayed until the overall economy improves and more residents are able to contribute through spending locally.

Family and Youth Leadership Development Related to Business Activities – this would include any activities strategically targeting programs and business activities of enhancing life and job skills for working families, youth, veterans and seniors. Partnerships with UT-Extension and Community Foundations are suggested to be pursued within the next two to five years.

Coordination of Social and Human Services to Stabilize the Community – the City leadership of City of Lewisburg and Marshall County should work closely over the next year to identify the total number of families who represent working families as well as some general characteristics



of these families. Efforts of the newly formed Social and Human Services Council could be made to conduct a focus group or other effective survey to examine the causes of suicide and prescription drug abuse. A strategic initiative is recommended to be implemented within three years with continuous staff and funding support. Components of any initiative should include assistance from the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN), local health and human services agencies, community representatives and faith based organizations.

## **WHAT WAS SAID IN THE INTERVIEWS**

The Resource Team spent two days interviewing the local residents to hear what they had to say. Those being interviewed were directed to answer three questions:

- ✓ What are the major problems/challenges in the community?
- ✓ What are the major strengths/assets of the community?
- ✓ What projects would you like to see implemented in your community in the next two, five, ten, or twenty years?

Listed below, without comment, is what was heard from those who volunteered to be interviewed.

## **MAJOR PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES**

- Low level of people who graduate or go on to seek higher education
- Minister, apathy, complacency, lack of interest to bring more business or changes to the community
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Higher percentage of rental property to owners
- Ditto
- Too close to major or shopping or eating places, hard to complete with. Need to c
- Ditto
- Lack of high paying white collar jobs
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Children education leave
- Ditto
- May be an issue of perception that we don't have
- Perception of taxes
- More coordinator between the different groups, sharing information,
- Leadership falls to retired folks, like to involve younger people in leadership, from
- Encourage people to lie closer to downtown
- Ditto everything
- Leadership of the community need to step up, stay out of elected leadership
- Property taxes out of line, three times higher than Williamson county

- Working together as a community for progressive growth
- Same 50 people doing the moving forward
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Property taxes higher in
- Add upscale restaurants
- If you ain't from here
- I've been here 42 years – I am almost eligible for a green card
- Influx of people, what's in it for me,
- Taxes from real estate, or sales taxes, how do we keep them here
- 35 miles from large retail mall, puts out mom and pop businesses
- We talk about what we want to do, but we don't put it in the plan
- Disseminations of information need to improve. Mike puts out a good newsletter, but general public
- Fearful of treading on other retail does
- Communicate with everyone, to get word out
- How to reach folks without email
- People shopping out of town, cheaper products elsewhere
- People don't look at email, too much, so they don't look at
- Lots of wonderful facilities, but not enough people use it.
- Sales tax revenue not getting online from shopping on internet
- LDA, industrial boards, service organizations, educate why you want in the same direction
- Need better communication among the cities and county
- Workforce development need to continue to work on, separate ourselves from the pack
- Market ourselves as unique
- White collar workers needed
- County and city get along better
- Generally people don't speak well of what is going on in the county
- Like Will Rogers, if you can't say something nice, don't say anything
- Lot of kids don't want to come back
- Lack job opportunities
- Unemployment, at one point last year, we had the highest in the state
- Job retention, 2000 of the best jobs lost, a couple of years ago
- Ditto
- Job creation limited
- Ditto
- Negative media image
- Local paper is not local any more

- City announcements no longer
- Not reflecting a good light
- Major writer covering community does not even live here
- Unemployment a big deal
- I'm the goat goddess"
- Too much on entrepreneurial development rather than industrial
- Too many holes on the square
- People don't want to invest their money in the square
- No movie theaters
- Issue of the bypass, where would you d
- People don't shop local
- Local hardware stores not open on
- Ditto
- No courthouse offices open on Saturday afternoons
- Ditto
- Used to be open ½ on Thursday and ½ on Saturday
- Ditto
- Used to be a big deal to go down on Saturday
- Improvements broadband
- Ditto
- Rely too much on local governments and civic groups, more private money needed, need to show private \$not in vain
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Since 1989 hasn't been a tax create, when reach a certain point, we have to raise taxes
- Same issue with county, going through a reappraisal mandated by the state, could catch us this year
- Taxes, third highest COUNTY in state for taxes.
- When we have had county reappraisals, the city drops theirs, to not impact the citizens
- Apathy – disconnect between people in the community (new industry people and locals)
- Disinterest among business leaders (industry business folks don't get involved or run for office)
- Selfishness – I want to take care of myself (don't really mean it)
- Implementation – we do a good job of strategizing but poor job of implementation
- Lack of commercial developers "we use to do this way" – don't have mover and shaker group doing it on their own
- Utilization of technology by the general population
- Small business don't utilize technology like they should

- Quality of leadership is weak. The pool is shallow to pick from and ranges from city to boards and committees
- Ditto, fatigue – the same 25 people are involved in everything
- There are agendas in politics
- Education – reputation of a good education system in the past, but right now we don't have that reputation or perception of a good education system
- Perception of minorities or people that were not raised here have a sense they don't get a fair shake (might be an excuse people use to not get involved)
- Government red tape (grants, tax credits, etc) make it difficult to move forward with recruitment of new business.
- People are uninformed – need to do a better of job of communicating
- Obesity is a significant issue
- Primary Care P access
- Lack of indigent care
- Unemployment
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Lack of senior programs (housing, programs)
- Drug problem (prescription drug problem) – people can't get employed as they can't pass the drug test
- Lot of over doses in this community
- Many of the drug users are unemployable
- Lack of good paying jobs
- Prescription drug problems
- Education – we have kids in our high schools that can't read a paragraph if their life depended on it
- Quality of job applicants has declined – younger people are not staying in this community
- Failing a segment of the population that are getting out of our school system that are not well education
- Not enough space in county health to serve clients in Marshall county
- Mental health issues and patients – lack of facilities and services
- Halfway house (women with addition, housing needs, DV) – has strained resource
- Aging population in physicians – recruiting patients and will be hurting in next 5 years; commitment time is 3 years and difficult to get physicians to stay that long
- Difficulty in finding American physicians
- “Snifist” – hospitalist but in long term care
- Communication about services
- I'm running for office, so I don't see any problems! (ditto)

- Problem in courts and community is prescription drug abuse
- Community does not support local business as much as they should. We have to drive out of the county to shop and we now have it in our mind that we have to travel to shop and eat and we won't get business to grow here if we continue to do that.
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Don't have a major 4 lane coming into the city
- Education of constituents (Out lyers) – poor grammar is acceptable from early on to adulthood – has affected ability to have call centers as many don't have have grammar skills for those jobs
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Kids leaving Lewisburg and not coming back because there are no opportunities for them to come back to
- This has been an industrial base forever, need to transition to service based
- Well being of fine arts – we are more agricultural than cultural – a person should be well rounded
- It must be a pretty good place – 3 years ago my wife and I went to FL in a gated community – we are in the process of moving back! My wife is
- Lack of initiative – there are only a handful willing to do anything
- Ditto
- We are becoming more progressive – however, everyone should feel welcome to be a part of decisions – challenge is that some people don't welcome fresh and new ideas
- Lack of initiative reflects in high school programs also – graduates see moving forward as moving away. Our bright students are not staying here
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- I don't think the issues are as bad as people talk about – still need to work on things
- Lack of access to adequate internet access
- Ditto times 7
- Community has a lot of good things, however, we are attracting the poor and the community does well at taking care of the poor but our resources are getting stretched thin. Great job in helping but it is taking a toll on our resources

- Ditto x 4
- We don't give our youth an opportunity to help
- People serving in offices and boards do not have a stake in our community – they are retired or will not stay permanently in our community; people feel it is being run the same old way
- Organizations are not give liberty to work in a positive way (chamber is an example)
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto – chamber needs to be a leader in this community
- The people that created the wealth and industry that are the backbone of this community, unfortunately, now we have to beg for industry to come to this community. Great if we could get entrepreneurial spirit back and create jobs here without recruiting questionable industry.
- Don't have global thinkers – most people don't travel global or out of this region. We continue to re-invent the wheel
- Ditto
- We have numerous committees and we have great ideas but we don't see them to the end
- Properties
- Transportation (public and traffic)
- Not a solid funding base to support chamber activities by counties or city
- Diversity of culture
- Ditto
- I live in a community that is too old to get fired
- Petition required to run for public office – need to do something about qualifiers
- Ditto x 7
- Apathy
- Ditto
- 1980s it was about “me” attitude, we still have that – we need to realize it is not about ME. There are people here that can help small business. Need to quit asking what is in it for me.
- Ditto grammar, also job skills are lacking
- Community Pride
- Overuse of the “we have always done it that way”
- Ditto
- No jobs and children are struggling
- Don't have a place for youth to hang out
- Once were a rich county in industry and they provided jobs and opportunities for a majority of our population as we have lost several thousands of those jobs there has been nothing to

replace it. Those that lost jobs were not educated to be able to find other jobs. Has affected school programs (i.e. books at home).

- Underemployment – people that had good jobs are now working in low paying jobs.
- Unemployment (60-72% reduction in students)
- Little kids are not in pre-school or day care and not having help in beginning of their school life
- Poverty is an issue – many students come from homes that parents don't have jobs so kids are not learning work ethic. Best and brightest are moving away and we need them to stay here and become leaders in the community.
- Ditto – kids that get a degree will never come back here
- Drugs issue – because of location
- Worry about kids that are a C, D-, that love this region and they can't find a job to stay here, so they end up living here but working somewhere else.
- Small town local business has diminished because no one is spending money in Marshall County.
- Juvenile service department is a weakness (legal side of juvenile services)
- Hope is a powerful thing, 2<sup>nd</sup> to love hope is the most powerful word in the dictionary. We have kids that don't have any hope. They see life in their home, low income or no job and there is no push of anyone in their life to get an education. They don't see education = opportunity and income. Because they have lost hope they have lost work ethic – leads them into the drugs, which compounds the problem.
- Ditto (our kids are growing up to see where to get social services, welfare, etc. because they see their parents – you are what you grow up with. They don't have the desire to do better because they don't see it at home.
- When kids have no hope they only see starting a family as their future – teen pregnancy
- Drop out – the aspect of nothing at home leads them in that direction. Kids don't see the importance of the education and to graduate because parents don't graduate and have jobs.
- Lack of morals and teen pregnancy
- i.e. High school wanted to host a parent meeting to inform parents on how kids can graduate and go on to further education. (10 out of 800 parents attended) Parental involvement is not good.
- Standards have become so rigorous; parents do not have the ability and skills to help the kids at home.
- Apathy from the families
- People that eat here are fast food people, so we have fast food places
- For community as a whole, unemployment and folks struggling financially
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto



- Seeing a lot of desperation, if you personally haven't been affected by loss of job someone in your family has – so we see desperation with people paying bills, etc.
- Ditto
- Mentality of continuing to do the same thing but expecting different results. Lack of new ideas.
- Ditto
- With all the federal/state mandates, education is difficult and a struggle
- State/County don't work well together
- Lack of ingenuity – closed mindedness when ideas come out – sometimes feel like we are stuck in the 1950's and we can't get out of it.
- Not a stable community – not working together for 1 common goal and good of the whole county – if you pick up local paper and read what is going on you would say “get me out of here” – seems to be that kind of attitude. Lots of opinions and people will not listen to anyone knew.
- Ditto
- Lack of appropriate skilled workforce
- Conflict within school board
- Young people are not investing themselves in the community
- Conflict and newspaper – paper does not do enough to focus on the good – it is more of a scandal rag and focus only on the conflict.
- Everyone is pulling for \$ - kids, organizations, etc. and businesses are getting drained
- Pessimistic mind set – I think we are in an emotional depression, not economic depression. You can't find people that WANT to work.
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Many people can't pass the drug test for employment
- If something happened 20 years ago, no one gets over it “You can't drive if you are looking in the rear view mirror.”
- Students
- Keeping kids out of trouble.
- Drugs, violence and nothing for young people to do
- There is nothing for young people to do; no jobs for young people
- Littering
- Drug dealers
- The traffic after school.
- Not enough for kids to do
- Not enough jobs for the community
- Drugs and violence
- Not a very good downtown square, lacking businesses

- High unemployment
- It takes too much time to get anything done
- Drugs and establishing better economy
- Not a lot to do, the road work, drugs, lack of jobs
- No jobs and jobs we do have pay minimum wage
- People that work out of town shop and buy out of town
- Lack of Jobs
- Nothing to keep people in Lewisburg – no good restaurants, good shopping
- A few years ago, Marshall County was lowest employment in the state, then we became highest, we need jobs.
- Infrastructure – we fail to keep up with the things that make community grow: roads, water, etc.
- Until we can get officials to agree...
- Wall built around county that says we don't want small businesses, our zoning restricts small business. City needs to incorporate property
- Don't do anything to help small business survive – no incentives and no support
- Ditto
- Ditto
- I have lived here all my life and I don't think my son will be able to
- Land prices are too high without anything here for them
- Lack of economic growth, lack of job opportunities
- Lack of job opportunities for young people
- Lack of programs and activities for children - many churches and school activities: can we consolidate?
- Government needs to get behind businesses and generate tax dollars without just adding taxes to our homeowners, whether it is from city or county.
- We need small business – mom and pop type businesses and everything can't go on the by-pass, need businesses on main roads. Need to change zoning to make that happen. Government needs to step up to make business work here
- Property taxes are too high
- Government doesn't work within a budget – government should work like a businesses.
- Taxes are high, but I would pay more if there were services for me
- Taxes are high
- There is a difference in how they treat industry and small business (incentives for industry – nothing for small business)
- Liquor by the drink – citizens was asked to vote for it and then we would get good restaurants – restaurants did not come.
- When road under construction was being planned, there was lots of negativism
- No major long-range plan – no one looks on the horizon

- We need to buy hearing aids and glasses for our government officials so they can hear and see better (the whole nation, not just here)
- Retail and business community
- One major employer – many people have to go outside county to work
- Workforce – people who are unemployed are unemployable – many fail drug test
- Local community does not spend money within the community – getting local to spend locally. When you work outside the community spend money outside the community
- 2 vacant lots on the square – see same people at the
- Bothers me when I drive into town, there is no civic pride – buildings falling down, couches and car seats on front porches. Is there a law you have to have a couch on your front porch? No, but it looks better with a washing machine next to it.
- Not enforcing rules and codes such as sign codes
- Lack of information that city officials have so they are not making good decisions; citizens don't know what the priorities are of the city – problems are not addressed in city budget
- Spending more money on recreation than on economic development
- Ditto
- Don't hold our elected officials accountable
- Lack of education and emphasis on education – poor job on letting our citizens know how they should contribute to the community. We have gone from a community of givers to a community of takers.
- Too many kids graduating from school and they don't do anything and won't do anything
- Ditto
- Don't understand why people don't buy local – we do have codes but they don't enforce.
- Lack of pride in our community
- Leadership does not know how to lead us utilizing the assets we have
- Ditto
- Community leaders (city and county) have personal agendas and they can't get along – they won't agree for the good of the whole. They are the blind leading the blind. Leadership doesn't understand business and taxes.
- Codes are enforced on the small business owners – they will tax us to death and doesn't give us any incentives to improve our businesses
- Good old boy political environment
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Chamber does not support business
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Outsider doesn't get support from locals

- Most people are on welfare and don't care about what is happening in the community
- Council and commissioners pocket books are not affected by the decisions they make (they are retired or state employees). There is not one of the business owners that could get elected.
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Spring Hill – took residential taxes away and added it to business owners: don't want that to happen here
- You feel like you are alone – no cohesion to use the knowledge that is here
- You hear from the chamber when they need a donation, but that is it
- Chamber only has 1 person so we don't see much service
- The chamber raises money to pay somebody
- Finding ways to develop cooperative benevolent benefits – has been difficult to get something going
- Territorialism among churches – everyone is generous, but want to do it themselves
- Ditto
- Social services are segmented or fragmented – hard for educated clergy to figure out how to access services so think what it is like for a poor person
- “Going church to church” syndrome
- Hard enough to be poor but even worse when you can't figure out what to do
- We also have people that learn how to work the system
- In spite of generosity of people, there is still an amount of apathy – why do we need this; we tried this before, etc.
- People have been drained by the demands of the community – high level of poverty and people dependent
- Nutrition – percentage of kids is 80% on free breakfast program. Those programs don't get the credit they need and unfortunately the programs don't operate in the summer. Concerned about nutrition for young people.
- Kids growing up see I-65 and they want to get out of Lewisburg
- Leadership – getting young people to step up and get into leadership of the community – everyone on council is retired. Leadership is an older group – we need and should encourage younger people to be involved
- Business and professional people use to be the leadership, but they are not anymore.
- Poverty and unemployment has created a situation in the older part of town has deteriorated – also landlords have taken advantage and charge exorbitant rents and don't fix anything or bring properties up to date and make them decent to live in.
- Square and historic building, housing stock that is deteriorating
- What is the new normal for Lewisburg? It is no longer long-term careers

- We are not preparing students for the future that they will be changing careers 3 or 4 times in their lifetime.
- People are still stuck in how it use to be
- I.e. Call center job fair in Silver Spring – people don't even understand what is a call center. People are not prepared for the job market – chain effect – doesn't keep homes up, therefore dwindling tax base, etc.
- People are unaware of how much state and federal \$\$ come into this community.
- Law Enforcement (10)
- Lack of major industry
- Ditto, to bring up a tax base
- Law enforcement is short-handed, short manpower
- Lacking businesses that will bring people to Lewisburg
- Lack of jobs
- Alcohol and drug use and seeing a trend of mental illness
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Whatever issues with crime there is we don't have enough manpower to take care of it
- Gang issue is escalating (drugs, homicides)
- Drug issue – meth and prescription
- Ditto
- Infrastructure in city and some of county: infrastructure is starting to decline; ;road maintenance, sidewalk
- City is not appealing to people – will not attract them or their business
- Ditto - 95% of problem related to drug (gangs on the rise)
- We in LE are being reactive and can't be proactive because of lack of officers
- Revenue is a driving force in the community
- We don't present a good face when industry comes in; we seem to be in a decline rather than pushing forward.
- Need new industries
- Lack of industry and commerce and a vision of what we need to be from the leaders of the city
- Find a way to unify leadership in our community and get them all on the same page
- Ditto
- Ditto
- More unified and progressive leadership with a vision and look to the future and not worry about what happened in the past, let's move forward
- Ditto
- Federal government is continually changing and difficult to come up with
- Need more industry

- Ditto
- Beautification, entrances into the city need improvement
- Younger residents have no enthusiasm to move forward and is in a state of doldrums
- Need an injection of adrenal – more positive attitude
- Need sales tax revenue
- Lack of restaurants
- Lime formation makes it cost prohibitive for us
- Rural towns like us cannot qualify for rural development grants/loans because of size
- City council combating against each other – need togetherness, we won't grow until we have that togetherness
- There are services for low income seniors and seniors who are wealthier we have a good assisted living – it is the middle income people that don't have the financial assistance.
- We don't have adult day care
- Issues in recruiting industry and jobs, we need to find ways to attract them – maybe educating workforce or quality of life
- LDA – merchants and business owners downtown taking up parking spaces
- Unemployment, jobs
- Construction on city streets is taking too long to complete
- Rock Creek Park, music is too loud on amplifier
- Unemployment
- Downtown square is pitiful - no parking, no businesses, etc. There is nothing on the square.
- Lack of retail
- We are losing tax revenue due to people shopping out of town
- Art Guild – do not feel they are supported by the city (i.e. tried to get a room in the \_\_\_\_\_ building and couldn't get an answer from city for 2 years)
- Have a problem getting people into Cornersville
- Newspaper wants to sensationalize the bickering of our leadership
- Art Guild (organized 1976) has been supported by merchants and not supported by county (annual art show – **Arts are Popping on 4<sup>th</sup> of July**)
- Training for elected officials to get them on the same page
- Training for elected officials so they understand what their job is and not address personal vendettas
- Government is the good old boy system and they don't veer away from that and business is handled outside of the meetings, they are handled outside of the meeting
- Broadband, high speed internet access is lacking
- Too much emphasis on sports and not other activities
- Taking PE out of our schools, when kids are exercising their body they also exercise their minds
- Unemployment

- People don't have the money to shop
- Length of county makes our villages in competition with each other
- HWY 31A – up to 2 years ago had 2 stop lights and now we only have 1 and it flashes caution on one side and red on the other to stop traffic. Lights are needed.
- Lots of construction has been annoying
- Economy, lots of businesses shut down and moving out of the country putting people out of work
- Lots of businesses leaving with none coming in to replace them
- Unemployment high
- Entertainment places lacking
- Ditto
- Fast food places only
- No family oriented places for entertainment
- Ditto
- Construction – annoying but beneficial
- Job opportunities
- Drug problem
- Ditto
- Unemployment rate is high and seems to be getting worse; seems to be more popular with adults with children; and now kids are getting laid off
- Lack of family oriented places – have to leave Lewisburg to do shopping
- Not many venues for families or young adults, no where to eat or shop
- Lewisburg got its first Mayor, would like to see more women in leadership
- Construction
- Entertainment is lacking
- Factory work is lacking
- Teens have no place to go – get ticketed for hanging out in parking lots
- Ditto
- Unemployment, no job opportunities for youth
- School system for kids – we are paying for the last 3 superintendent; teachers are not getting any raises; lack of money causes my kids to not have books
- Education – low wages for teachers, so we are losing good teachers
- In nicer communities drugs are becoming a problem (meth) – kids not having things to do cause them to turn to drugs
- Had a friend that wanted to go to Princeton, but was told her education did not allow her to be accepted
- Construction – do too many projects at one time
- Education – not preparing you for college both in education and living

- Last pages of newspaper is listing of foreclosures – what is going to happen to empty houses – will they become Lewisburg’s problem
- Lack of diversity (people)
- Health issues – you have to go out of town for service. We only have 4 dr. and 3 dentists, but you can’t the help you need here.
- Teen pregnancy
- Education – kids seem behind from other communities
- Lack of preparation for kids to go on to college.

## **MAJOR STRENGTHS AND ASSETS**

- 95 counties, we have interstate north and south,
- State park here
- Great civil clubs who give back to the community
- We have very giving people
- Like the small town atmosphere
- I enjoy driving my antique stars
- Two exits from 65, underutilized, room for light industry
- Heart of middle Tennessee
- Good for industrial hub
- Heart of the hub going out
- People working the hearts out and are very committee
- Dedicated volunteers and generous people
- Location, location, location
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Infrastructure
- Safe place to live
- Like being near a major city
- Very giving a caring
- Great sports community
- Little league complex
- Regional and district playoffs
- Tennessee walking headquarters
- Free entertainment



- Pull a lot of people in for activities
- Recycling and strong green initiative
- Walkways
- Energy efficiency
- Good weather, families have moved in because it's a great place to live, industry brought in extended families
- Lots of history, helps bring attention to community, 175 year old churches, need to put more emphasis on historical aspect
- Lots of retirees come because of our assets and weather
- Walking trails
- Lots of festival
- Lots of music, sometimes
- Small town atmosphere
- Ditto
- Ditto
- We have everything
- Beauty of the area,
- Mild weather
- 4 seasons
- County and cities have put lots of money into the city, lots of investments
- Lots of technology
- Work very hard to put forward a good image forward of our community.
- Industrial parks great for attracting business
- Fiscal conservative attitude. Not extravagant in our expenditures
- Youth, we have lots of good kids
- Sports
- Ditto
- Sports bring communities together.
- Lot of stellar athletes
- Good sports teams
- Tight knit communities, chapel hill tight, Lewiston same in terms of being tight knit
- Sometimes our community cares more about sports than academics. When was the last time you saw 20,000 in the stands for a math contest.
- Be nice to balance academics and sports
- Leadership Marshall County a great
- Ditto
- Location, location, location middle of the US
- River ports
- Railroads

- Great place for distribution
- Industrial park
- middle of state, middle in
- Community gets along well
- Little league
- Very competitive
- The recreation center for a minimal choice
- Greg Lowe
- Parks department, outdoor lands, golf course, little league, soccer fields, greenways, ball fields, Columbia college
- Business leaders
- New Lake
- Jones and Harmon parks
- Great parks and recreation
- 2<sup>nd</sup> to no one in parks and recreation, but comes as a price
- Ball parks
- More state championships in all sports than the rest of middle TN
- Churches 93 in the county
- Care kitchen every Thursday night at Methodist church, other churches help
- Quality of life
- I like living in Lewisburg, cows, horses, hospitals, city hall, laid back life, everybody know me, I know everyone
- It's comforting don't have to worry about safety
- I can go to Nashville for the City life
- We are more Mayberry than Lincoln County....
- Greg Lowe – if we don't appreciate him we are going to lose him. If he leaves we will be in serious trouble.
- TN technology Center; Columbia State College; Marshall County adult education system – good post secondary education system
- Local ECD director
- Location – very good with I-65, location to metropolitan areas, good strategic spot
- Quality of life – Henry Horton State park – brings people from all over
- New Lake
- Recreation Center
- Great support for moral causes – sickness in families, fire, benevolent causes, and community will put its arms around those problems – many times anonymously. Down and out find assistance.
- Lots of capital – money here – investors will go for it if there is a good deal.
- With interest rates low, people are starting to look at investing in Lewisburg.

- 2 main tourist draws : Goats and more festival; Lions Club tractor pull (3<sup>rd</sup> largest in the world)
- Churches are strong – all denominations are represented. They get along and do things together. Long established churches with a strong presence.
- Road system – new construction connecting us to I-65 and I-65 is the corridor connecting us to everything
- Potential to have a strong education system
- Emergency care services
- Specialty clinic
- College offers associate degrees to help with clinical
- Ditto
- Location – centrally located between Huntsville and Nashville, wish more businesses would locate here
- Strong faith based community
- Service sector jobs – moving from manufacturing jobs to service jobs, slowly
- Young clientele so we can provide good information and education in terms of health care
- Organized team sports; walking trails
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Recreation center, walking trails, parks
- Centerstone and behavioral health in our community (need inpatient facilities) – out patient resources are great
- Communication between health centers in the community – quarterly meetings and helps with continuum of care and continuity of care
- Services and facility to help abused children – Junior's House
- With all the downturns we have had, in the 2010 census we grew, we are a good place to live
- Great people – those that want to help, they go above and beyond – great community
- Aggressiveness of new leaders
- Every child that graduates get CPR
- Care about community
- People are our major asset
- Joint ED board (cities of mayors working together)
- Low crime
- Churches
- Lack of traffic
- Location
- Ditto
- Big city with a small time atmosphere and knowing everyone

- Ditto x 3
- Hard working people
- 90/10 rule applies but the 10 are awesome
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Positive social
- Sense of civic pride and patriotism
- Community college and hospital
- Ones that do, really do
- Recreational facilities
- Location
- Ditto
- Green initiative, 10%, Greg Lowe
- Churches and civic groups
- Fire and police protection
- Greenway
- Available work force
- Close to small cities and large (Nashville and Franklin, Huntsville, AL)
- Railroad/interstate
- Great education system
- Have a lot to offer, we just need to get people here
- Career and Technical education department that will give students skills to be employable and help them to want to further their education.
- Ditto
- There are a lot of strange faces in the businesses and industry and so they are brining folks in, not hiring locally.
- Active churches and civic organizations that are willing to help
- After school programs to help children (just don't have enough to serve all the need)
- Sense of community – we are not rich, but we know everyone will help and answer questions. Lots of cooperation. Just not enough people
- Teachers – work hard. Don't have a teacher at the high school that has not reached the minimum of training required. They are innovative – teacher workforce is there to take students in the direction we want to go
- Safety and small town feel
- Businesses are helpful and supportive and have the sense that everyone cares
- With people moving in – housing is important – land and housing is affordable
- Great that city is recruiting industry, but we don't have much money for incentives

- Loving, caring community – wonderful place to live with parks, golf courses, anything you want to do is here
- Great place to raise children, small town, soccer, basketball, etc.
- Great technology system in the schools – state of the art systems (classrooms, distance learning, etc.)
- Resource team coming to Lewisburg – great direction
- Have a newspaper that reports its perception and opinions – and its conflicts for people need to know what is going on. We don't recognize the stupid things we do, but the paper is at least talking about it.
- Location
- Ditto
- Intellectual capital – lot of great people. We just need to find a way for people to work together and sacrifice
- Ditto
- Sports in Lewisburg (parents pour a lot of money into sports here)
- Ditto
- Community theatre
- Potential to have a great education system (we have excellent teachers and administrators)
- Location is huge
- Industrial park – less than 9/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile from I-65. Connects us to all major cities. Great area for distribution center.
- Natural beauty of community
- Compare ourselves to Nashville – but we have more: taxes are lower; cost of living; housing
- Recreation Center
- Hospital in our community is an asset; also being part of a regional hospital
- Greenway, sport complex and Goat Festival
- Major rail line
- Safe community
- Families stick together
- The Recreation Center, Sport Zone, Sports
- Police
- Some good cops
- Good firemen
- Most people are very friendly
- The Rock Creek Walk and concert stage
- The Recreation Center is a valuable asset
- Good education
- Potential to grow

- Low crime rate
- Even though we are short on money we will try to move forward
- Industrial park, theatre
- Small Town, people want to work, we have a bakery
- When I moved here, everyone was so welcoming
- Recreation center, great parks, golf courses, you can play any sports you want to. If a kid can't afford it he can still play here
- Location to I-65 – location is perfect for growth
- Good workforce
- Lot of good stuff: police, fireman, all around good personalities and they all get along
- Quality of life, Low crime, simple lifestyle
- Location
- Natural gas, TVA, River and lakes
- Strong school system
- Ditto
- Unique things: community theatre; drive-in theatre, State Park, Community College – Columbia state
- Close knit community – we have all been here all our lives and we get along
- Centrally located
- Great place to raise kids, you just can't feed them right now
- Good sports activities – our city and county loves sports
- If we did as well with sports we would be the best town in the state
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Great geographical location
- Ditto
- Civic clubs
- Ability to unite as a whole (goat festival for example)
- Ditto
- Location is a strong asset
- Natural beauty of middle TN and if we can't sell that we can't sell anything
- Location
- Cheap land, cheap houses
- Opportunities for distribution centers
- Location (access to a major interstate)
- Scenery – take a ride, this place will sell on its scenery
- 8-10 hours from mountains, coast, etc.

- 15 hours of 80 % of the population of the country
- Duck River – 270 miles and we don't capitalize on it
- State Park (eco tourism stuff could happen)
- Wealth of knowledge of business people to utilizes
- Ditto
- Good business people and they are trying to improve things
- Outdoorsman paradise and shielded from natural disasters
- From an entrepreneurial standpoint this could be a perfect distribution center
- Good people – not utilized
- Ditto – if we have a sick child we can get lot of people to come out and help
- Location – what else would you want
- Marshall county is full of good people, but they don't feel like they have a chance here
- Ditto
- Beautiful state park, walking paths, etc. we just don't utilize them enough
- Good school program given what they have to work with
- Good place to raise children
- Reasonable cost of living
- Cost of homes is reasonable
- High property taxes and low property values
- We have brilliant a children, but they don't stay here
- Churches do work well with each other
- Churches have remained downtown and kept up their facilities, expanded campuses.
- This is the south and you can still depend on people to go to the south. Normal to ask the question of “where do you go to church”. If we can unify and harness that energy we can be successful.
- Ministerial association is strong and we have community events together.
- Generous community when the need is there (but only on demand)
- Arts are strong in this community – Dixie Theatre; choir at school; offers an opportunity for young people and adults to experience something new.
- Good Samaritan program
- Good core of civilians in community – they want to help but don't know where to go
- Loyal, dedicated community – they want to work, they just can't find that place to go
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Local business owners are supporters of community events and charity events – always asking what they can do to help
- Location – I-65; close to major cities; seems like a good place for industry to locate
- Ditto
- School system – people have a choice

- Ditto
- Strength is the people
- Good industrial complex
- Great workforce – if there were manufacturing jobs available we would have the people
- People – generous community
- Small town community – we have the Square
- When I moved here from FL and interviewed for this job, and went to restaurants to eat, I was the only person they didn't greet by name. That is why I moved here.
- Location, Marshall county located less than 1 hour from Nashville and Huntsville, we have the location and opportunity
- People in general – ready to help
- Infrastructure is in pretty good shape
- Good qualified workforce, infrastructure
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Attitude of people generally is very good, we just need to motivate younger people to get involved in local government
- Caring attitude
- Community has good potential
- Plenty of churches and how you act when you get out of church is on you
- Greg Lowe and Mike Wiles trying to do a good job, but they have difficulties when it comes back to the city
- Churches are exceptional in dealing with the community: many good programs; food programs; help elderly; etc.
- Lewisburg is a close knit family
- Central location between everywhere
- Good location, good combination of rural and urban
- Beautiful location
- Available location
- Affordable living
- Very involved churches
- Columbia State Community College
- Senior citizens that have the knowledge and experience to lead us
- Caring community – help people in need
- Excellent churches, they are not filled every Sunday, but they are beautiful
- Rock Creek Park – great park
- New Lake
- Clubs – excellent clubs – many of us belong to several
- There are lots of things to do in Lewisburg if you get off your fanny and enjoy it



- Ditto
- Beautiful here, people take care of their property
- Everything is here to have a good life
- Good place to live, quiet and not a lot of killings
- Recreation Center
- Senior citizen program is excellent
- Museum is an asset – needs money and expansion
- Community theatre is excellent and involves so many people
- Good health: life flight; ambulance; access to life flight; hospital
- State Park
- Cornersville – wouldn't live any place else in the world
- Cornersville – our council doesn't fight and we don't make decision outside the meeting
- People – I had a heart attack and people came to my house and wanted to help – they brought food, cleaned house, mowed the yard – I didn't even know them. I am thinking about having another heart attack.
- Little Corners got a dump
- Law Enforcement department
- Pre-school
- Community college
- #1 reason people come to Lewisburg: come to be near children
- Leadership course
- Drive-in Theatre
- Golf courses in Lewisburg and Cornersville
- Historic museum
- All villages
- Good participation from seniors
- Recreation center has senior exercise class
- Small town
- Scholarship opportunities for Marshall county residents
- Strong community support when people are in need
- Community very good at helping people with problems
- TN lottery and scholarship program
- I was going to say low crime, but then I am hearing about the drug problem from everyone
- Community College
- Roads is a strong point
- Hospitality of small town
- See the community trying to put events together (Goat Festival for example), they are trying to open options to bring everyone together
- Close knit community everyone strives to help everyone out

- Seeing some new businesses and restaurants coming to town
- It seems like it is growing, just slowly and it is taking a long time
- Church populated community
- Close relations
- College
- Ditto
- Road construction
- Small town feel and everyone is so welcoming
- Ditto
- Everyone knows everyone
- Size and close knit community
- Everything is within a short distance or a loop – can get around quickly
- Traffic is light and you can get around easily
- State Park
- Recreation Center
- Small town – everyone knows your business and everyone knows your business
- Talking about bullying in the school system – good start, at least they are trying educate
- Marshall county – we help with social issues (bullying, obesity, etc.) – getting parents involved as well as students

## **PROJECTS AND ISSUES**

- 2 years, more jobs
- Proponent fro planning for future. Need to look 20 years down the road and then spend money in those areas first.
- Substantial growth of retail business
- Lots of people moving here, more intentional effort for building senior housing if that it's what we want
- More sidewalks, trails that connect neighborhoods to downtown
- Approaches to town square improved
- Available parking for square
- Jobs, jobs
- Improvement of traffic flow
- Comprehensive water and utility systems in place for county and city
- Bike paths
- Convention/meeting center to facilitate large number of people
- Move all groups together to work in an effort toward one goal,
- Cultural complex or center to meet needs so don't want to go to other towns

- Need to look far enough into the future to plan for roads
- More middle class, more white collar jobs
- 70% college educated, where people would like to live
- Where is your gated community? It's on the farm
- New newspaper that works more as a team player to report what was going
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Love to see the community activity at the square, all the retail open, ice-cream store
- Book store
- Irish pub
- Ditto
- Starbucks
- Fund to start up new/initial start up businesses
- Residential building on top of downtown businesses
- Need to market ourselves as retirement community. Come with money, generous spirit, disposable income
- Assisted living neighborhood
- Halfbacking “
- Jobs, but without small town atmosphere
- Community cleanup
- Need paint, soap, water, elbow grease, aesthetic
- Resurrection of downtown
- Ditto
- Better shopping and eating places
- Ditto
- Exit 32 as a major commercial hub
- Retain
- Public private sub division lease free as a college student if you work
- Join service club, work for private industry, get
- Grow our own engineers
- High echelon works live out of town,

- Accentuate the positive
- Want to see Greg work has already done, to continue the enthusiasm in 20 years.
- I was born on the square, I love it here
- Sidewalk corridor
- Ditto
- Bike park
- Dog Park
- Schools getting old, start building greener schools
- In 20yrs Lone Oak cemetery is as beautiful as it is now
- Marshall Board of Ed is largest employer
- CKNA Cantus (auto parts, dash boards)
- A plan – what is the plan? And activation of the plan and accountability for implementation
- Entrepreneurial incubator center
- Metropolitan government (city and county merged)
- Convention center – sizes to be determined – but we could recruit convention groups
- More retail (restaurants, clothing for men and women, looking for more quality than what is at Wal Mart; things to do after hours)
- “Lewisburg Mall” – on line, virtual line for Mom and Pops. Looks like a mall on web page and you use it for marketing; purchasing – merchandise can go all over the world. Need to figure out costs for business owners
- More volunteers and more people willing to serve
- More opportunities for people that come through school system and want to move here
- Grow your own engineer program – industry having issues getting engineers, so use T-cap scores of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and find a few that have high potential for engineering and have a program that will put children on the path to be an engineer. (From education to job placement). Continue “grow your own program” in other disciplines
- Retirement community
- Ditto
- Better jobs, technically trained jobs – manufacturing jobs are leaving – see more technically employed people
- Dedicated senior housing
- 2 years – finish road projects that have been started
- Ditto
- Ditto
- 5 years – new up to date emergency equipment (our equipment is getting to retirement age)
- Long term – more industry, more doctors, see community flourish
- Ditto
- Expansion of wellness program so increase the number of sidewalks for walking

- Public or private transportation system especially for seniors or mental health patients.  
Current have public transportation ends at 3
- More restaurants and retail business; nice to be able to have healthy places to go
- Larger facility for county health
- Primary care in our health department (county/state) – hire more primary care nurses and physicians
- Commercial growth – local support for businesses, The people here want you to serve a 7 course meal for \$2.98
- More emphasis on public safety (funding)
- Ditto to retail, public safety
- Day care facilities and longer hours with weekend coverage
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Long-term; church doors busting wide open with people. See people turning back to god
- See more education programs at our colleges especially in health
- Mental health programs expanded in our community
- Clinic to support indigent population (they are not getting public services to help with their medical issues, so they are showing up at emergency room)
- Utilize talents of people
- Churches
- Whole Foods or organic or more consistent farmers market – healthy food options
- Square revitalized and functions and events happening
- Imagination library program – see our reading program expanded further
- Recreation facility – pro-rated fee for those that can't afford to utilize facility
- Schools to have track and field program – state of the art field
- New schools built and classrooms for specific skills such as health, culinary, etc.
- People getting out of hospital and seeking further education – more skilled than not
- Entrepreneurial incubator – private/public
- Square revitalized
- Ditto – more businesses opened on square
- Reduction in unemployment
- Ditto
- Ditto
- County-wide WIFI
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Smart growth – we chose Lewisburg to have our businesses, need to continue to grow smartly
- Revitalization of social options

- Unique draw (i.e. material store, unique business that will draw people to our community)
- Ditto
- Group of business people that understand a micro-loan program
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Community benefit from potential businesses
- 4 way highway, N-S, E-W so lots of traffic comes through here and supports our business and we have services that everyone can participate in and we are college educated
- Convention center – or meeting facility
- Buy the newspaper back and get back to a community newspaper. You almost have to bribe the paper to share information and stories. There are a lot out there happening but the paper does not report it so people think we don't do anything.
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Education – provide funding so anyone that wants to go to college can. Money should not be the reason people cannot finish their education.
- 5 years - Increased industry and vibrant downtown square area
- Advanced manufacturing center that incorporate modern technology (robotics, automation, etc.) Allow adults to be re-trained; we can train the folks you need for industry
- Need industry and jobs
- Downtown square with active businesses brought back
- 10 years – see growth (jobs and tax money)
- Restaurant (decent restaurant)
- Downtown square revitalized and buildings filled and restored, with open businesses (right now shows there is no pride in the community)
- Have some kind of program for students that is not traditional school
- Have a place for kids to hang out and have a decent place – other than the recreation center
- Locally owned hometown newspaper – we are selling sensationalism instead of coverage of our community. Would help the flow of information.
- Flexible scheduling for students – (workplace learning – started this year)
- Continue opportunities for best and brightest to see that there are potential jobs here so they will stay
- Workforce education – need to continue to focus on as a community and education system
- Opportunities for young people (entertainment, education, something outside of sport) Need things to get them involved in community.

- Retail, entertainment, manufacturing businesses, anything that can get folks to Lewisburg to spend money
- Revitalize the square by finding a niche – have the square be vibrant
- Ditto
- Very parochial in our thoughts, we always think what is best for Lewisburg. My vision is to achieve greatness by working on the concept of regionalism. I-65 corridor – all kinds of activity going on and you can go to 100,000 people if you think regionally. Need to focus on the whole. We are a pebble in the pile, need to become the pile.
- Some kind of a unique draw for the community. An entrepreneur opportunity
- LDA working on the square through the Main Street program and see that continued
- Ditto
- Widen Ellington parkway
- Ditto
- Beautification of the community but need some kinds of incentive that will allow people to invest in their property.
- From Wal-Mart to Walgreens on a Friday is packed with cars and traffic is stilled.
- We need to think big – we are arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic –
- How can Marshall County become a distribution center? Greg and Mike working on – better to store product than make them.
- Have an alliance of people from several counties that are active and work together and make big deals happen. It is going to take big and different ideas to make things happen.
- Need to focus on small business and entrepreneurs – no incentives for small business owners and assistance for small business owners to give them support. (Northfield)
- Better educated community on how to work and how to provide customer service. Need to work together to get a responsible, educated workforce.
- Public/private partnership that where we set goals on how many job we want to create – be specific and do research to determine impacts on taxes, etc. Be the marketing engine for Marshall County.
- Get a football field at MCHS
- A new football stadium on the MCHS campus
- Football stadium for the high school on campus
- Movie theater
- Get the roads finished
- More businesses and things to do
- More jobs, more roads to get more people here; more things to do in this place
- Construction in downtown
- Finish road work
- More businesses here
- Fix up the soccer fields

- 2 years – fix the roads; 5 years- fix empty lot on the square; 10-20 years – start up more sports (volleyball) and build a center for all sports
- Better economy, new jobs
- Road work,
- Need to expand city limits in order to grow
- Find a niche for this community – something different and outside the box (country music festival for upcoming song writers and singers)
- Training system in school or college for people that are not college material that they can be trained to do a job and be proud of it – need to train people to do a job well
- 4 lanes coming and out, every direction and businesses lined up. Mom and Pop stores that are being supported. More positive than negative
- Ditto
- Plan for public transportation 20 years, transportation to and from Nashville
- In a few years, come back and see the square with a lot of people on it supporting the businesses
- More entertainment, casual dining, walk in theatre
- Come back and look around and go to the banks, PO and various people around time and see representation of every walk of life. See that everyone was welcome and a part of what is going on
- More small businesses on the square
- As soon as you get off either exit you see that you are in Lewisburg with business
- School or company that taught kids about money (checkbooks and investing)
- Lights lit all the way to the highway (my dad talked about it 30 years ago)
- Running track at the high school
- Goat festival – continue with activities that draw people into Lewisburg
- See my condo in Florida – I made a lot of money here so I can go there
- We have good outstanding and good group of teachers – see kids that they know whatever they strive to do, if they put their mind to it, they can do it and within their reach.
- Metropolitan government and run like a business – someone to present the pros and cons and then let the community decide. (Murray County)
- See kids that graduate automatically say they are going home and enjoy their glory years here
- New hospital – we have great doctors and nurses, but people usually go to Franklin
- Pleases me to no end that people in this room feel like I do, I didn't know that until this meeting
- We have to find someone to run for public office and then ban together to get them elected
- Change codes or business will leave the community
- Square updated – get more business on our square and have codes that need to be followed (5 years)



- 2 years – 3 more business in new industrial park; 5 years develop land for a hotel; other businesses (exit 22)
- 1 year – highway completed – it has created a lot of business for me (I am in the body shop businesses), but I want to see it done
- 5 years – more retail which will create jobs and taxes; restaurants; open-minded business leaders that can sell this town; offer small business incentives
- On the square – be open on weekends and after 5:00 p.m. We don't cater to the citizens and businesses owners don't care
- More tourists and more for them to do – they drop money!
- 2 years – Recreation facility become a YMCA – become open minded to making a change
- Ditto
- 5 years – have community have pride – if you are going to do business here do it well
- Need a decent grocery store
- City officials need to be talking to corporations and get business here and assure them they will be supported.
- Create an atmosphere for people who are qualified to be leaders can be leaders. Create an atmosphere that expects the best from all its citizens.
- Town square – 2 to 5 years downtown revitalized. Rome was not built in a day and it is going to take time
- Square is vital
- Major employer in 5 years
- More executive from the industries living in our community
- Our future lies with us but it lies with our children too. Need more for kids.
- Amenities that make Lewisburg an attractive place to live
- Making roadways accessible for bike and walking
- Downtown public restroom
- Lewisburg spring (Rock Creek, 50 yards from Town Hall is a spring) make it part of a downtown walking tour. Springs supplied water to community – historic spot and needs to be dealt with.
- Ditto
- Homeless shelter
- When projects are underway when they are done they be planted with native plants that will do some good and teach a lesson about sustainability
- Long range plan for the city
- With state and federal government funds dwindling, the city needs to be ready to take on funding of numerous infrastructure projects.
- Center for cultural events
- Signage (directional for parking on the square), way finding signage

- Growth to the community industrial, commercial and residential – if you have a good community base, you have the opportunities for growth
- See community grow and prosper
- See people come here instead of going out of town to shop and eat
- Major industry so people can work here, then they will shop here and eat here
- Something for the youth in drug and gang prevention – if you can get kids at an early age and educate them on what they are getting into that might help
- Education of children in regards to law enforcement issues
- More officers
- New police department – we have outgrown it and it is outdated
- Don't have resources in our community for Domestic Violence; mentally ill patients, youth
- Opportunities and facility that would allow LE officials to interact with youth
- Gang Resistance program – implement in school system
- Work done on minor infrastructure – road and sidewalk – whatever we can do to make community presentable to industry
- Better hospital facilities
- Ditto
- Town Square needs to be revitalized
- Long term – comprehensive planning completed (react to the issues, but not plan for the future)
- Technology – natural gas vehicles
- Motivate the people to get involved and make changes – not many attitudes have changed
- Road construction completed
- Ditto
- Towns are created for a reason – there was a reason Lewisburg was created and I don't know what it was – it has involved into an industrial center – when the departure of industry happened, we were not prepared for it. Community didn't step forward quick enough to stop the exodus of people and industry. We also lost the leaders of industry and that was difficult for us. Need leadership with a futuristic outlook to develop a plan. Vivaciousness of people to do that. It is beautification, infrastructure.
- 10-20 years, have a niche for the education system, no matter what place you are (A, B, or C or D student) – a variety of jobs for everyone
- Water and waste water department become more financially solvent – EAP mandates hurt us and they cost us a lot of money.
- Ditto
- Ditto
- 5-7 years replacing gas lines and upgrade system
- Natural gas system expand throughout the community
- Natural gas vehicles

- Keep up with technology and infrastructure – need that to meet what is coming
- Accomplishments – better leadership in our community to understand and look out long-term
- Large percentage does not have public water, would like to see Marshall county residents be able to have potable water
- Change definition of rural so communities the size of Lewisburg will qualify for USDA grants/loans
- Internet service improved
- Come together more – we have so many services and we need to come together and work more cooperatively
- Need an adult day care
- Red light in Cornersville
- Need to look at our politics and get people in leadership that want to work and not fight
- Need tornado sirens and shelters
- Assess each homeowner \$10.00 to get tornado sirens and shelters
- We hope that you will give us feedback on our problems
- Consider computer notification of emergencies (law enforcement get notification sooner)
- Senior citizen center
- Get more young people involved
- Get young people in golf and have it be affordable for them
- Get women in golf
- Senior Center has more of an open space location – everything is in small rooms because it is done in the old school. We would have more interaction
- Ditto
- Large community center and you could include senior center
- Ditto
- Public water in some homes in county
- More industry – something that employees a lot of people
- Area with patio homes (gated community)
- New nutrition center built on 1 level so they don't have to use stairs
- Short term: new nice restaurants
- African American population is about 13%, would like to see more representation of black in offices where you pay taxes, go to post office, etc. See diversification in population and hire them (not the good old boy population).
- One stop shop at the city – one place you call to get information
- Senior center on one level with open space, chair lift; parking lot space
- More entertainment options for families and young people
- More family oriented facilities (movie theater)
- More jobs coming in and less going out
- Bookstore (i.e. Hastings)

- Lower crime and drug rates
- More variety of restaurants
- Improving education system
- More opportunities to pursue a career
- People producing more food that we eat – driveless community
- More businesses and restaurants, movie theatre
- Movie theatre, restaurants
- Better education from children
- Theme Park – bring it back
- Healthier options for food (both in restaurants and grocery)
- Opening more jobs for people by getting community more involved in the environment
- Technology needs to take a jump (rural areas have cell phone dead areas) – no fiber optic, cable options) Dirty lines in county. Technology pumped out into the county
- A chance to explore job opportunities
- Boys and Girls Club
- More health people
- Youth center
- Summer food program for kids that get food assistance during the school year
- Kids who parents are on Section 8 have more ability through social service programs to participate in sports, etc.
- More sport activities, i.e. indoor tennis facilities; better fitness facilities
- No shoulders on county roads so you can walk or ride a horse – you have to jump in a ditch if someone is coming towards you
- Ditto
- Education – get a good base education; keep kids focused on school, jobs, etc.
- Good education base can solve a lot of problems
- After school care
- Farmers Market
- County folks need more information on recycling
- Ditto
- Ditto
- More technology for school systems
- PM day cares (for babies); day care open at 6:00 p.m.

## 20 CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL

### **1. Evidence of Community Pride:**

Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.

### **2. Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:**

People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.

### **3. Willingness to Invest in the Future:**

In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.

### **4. Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:**

Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.

### **5. Cooperative Community Spirit:**

The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.

### **6. Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:**

Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.

### **7. Awareness of Competitive Positioning:**

Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.

### **8. Knowledge of the Physical Environment:**

Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.

### **9. Active Economic Development Program:**

There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.

### **10. Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:**

People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.

### **11. Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:**

Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.

### **12. Strong Belief in and Support for Education:**

Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.

### **13. Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care:**

Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.

### **14. Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:**

The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.

### **15. Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life:**

Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.

### **16. Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:**

Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.

### **17. Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:**

Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.

### **18. Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:**

Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.

### **19. Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:**

People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.

### **20. Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:**

Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

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*A HUGE thank you from all of us to all of the citizens of Lewisburg. We appreciated your hospitality, your genuine passion for your community, and your willingness to open up and participate in this assessment, assuring a bright future for Lewisburg and Marshall County.*